VOLUME 2 OCTOBER 99 ISSUE 7

NEW AGE GAMING SOUTH AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA'S OWN PC AND PLAYSTATION GAMING MAGAZINE

HOMEWORLD

NO HYPE ALL GAME
EXCLUSIVE FIRST REVIEW

Command & Conquer TIBERIAN SUN
EXPECTATIONS REACHED?

Age of Empires II THE AGE OF KINGS
TO RULE OR NOT TO RULE?

NEW KING OF THE CPU HILL

LEGACY of KAIN SOUL REAVER
IMPALING PREVIEW

PS2 REVEALED
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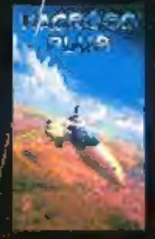

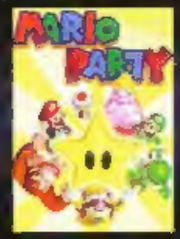

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ED's Note

The road to hell

I've recently taken up squash (now don't worry, we're not going to be doing a five page squash game roundup anytime soon). However, if you're wondering why, read on and I'll tell you, if you couldn't care less, sorry this is my space and I'll abuse it in any way I like. There is a point coming out of all this anyway, so you might as well put up with my personal saga just a little. So, the squash thing is my way of justifying the time I spend sitting down and soaking up monitor radiation. I'm starting to think that I'm getting lazy (physically that is) and I'm ending up agreeing with myself more and more, not to mention that coastal holidays are coming up sooner than my waistline is disappearing. The two fold point I'm getting to here is firstly to all you gamers out there, get up and run around the garden every now and then so you'll live long enough to play the next seven versions of Quake. Secondly, participating in sport clears the mind, unshackling it to come up with insights and profound thoughts, one of which I had just the other day... What do you think would happen if technology froze where it is today, no more new 3D chipsets or processors, no more advances in audio technology, Peripherals or the ever increasing size of your hard drive? The computer on your desk, as it is right now, forever. Besides every other sphere of life on Earth, what would the implications be on something as simple as gaming? As I see it games these days are driven and fed by technology, not programming techniques or new advances in coding optimisation. Developers rely on technology more than innovation to keep impressing the game playing community - unlike the PlayStation where developers only have a platform this big and must somehow keep improving the quality of games by pure innovation alone. I'm not talking about new concepts or different genres; I'm talking about the real improvements, new techniques to shift polygons faster through programming alone and not because the latest 3D card can now support a greater colour depth and resolution. Why is it that we pursue this technology beast with such fervour when we know it'll all end in tears? Debating aside, I'll return to my original question... I wonder where we'll be in a few years if somehow all new technology development for the PC stopped? What would the games look like five years from that point... just how much are these game developers not squeezing out of the existing technology and more importantly why do we find games that don't support everything new out there somehow lacking? If you think you have all the answers to these questions then please drop me a mail and we can argue about it in the next issue - who knows, perhaps someone out there has a solution or at the very least a reasonable argument and case for the developers.

Michael James, Editor

Things you should know

Firstly, an apology to all those readers out there who experienced difficulty with last months cover CD... the ironic thing is that in the process of trying to improve things we made a left turn instead of a right and ended up five turns back. The responsible people have had their game playing privileges revoked for a week. If you couldn't access last months CD interface then simply run the goodies on the disc from within Windows Explorer once again, sorry and it really shouldn't happen again.
Secondly, I'd like to thank Daniel Botha for helping out with this issue while he was temporarily working here as part of a school project (read Bits & Bytes for more information), it's nice to see that so many people are so interested in what we do here.
Thirdly, stop reading this and get to the back page, our cartoon has arrived and each month we'll give you a little insight into the workings of New Age Gaming, the people behind the show and what we really do all day. The cartoon is yet another slice of inspiration from Shryke who is turning out to be more useful than we could ever have imagined.
Lastly, we now have a new column called Rampage within these hallowed pages, the main focus behind the editorial there is to uncover the truth behind the hype or as the writer of the column put it, stop picking your noses and start thinking, rude fellow. If you have any comments about the topic or just want to shower praise then send a mail and we'll make you famous.

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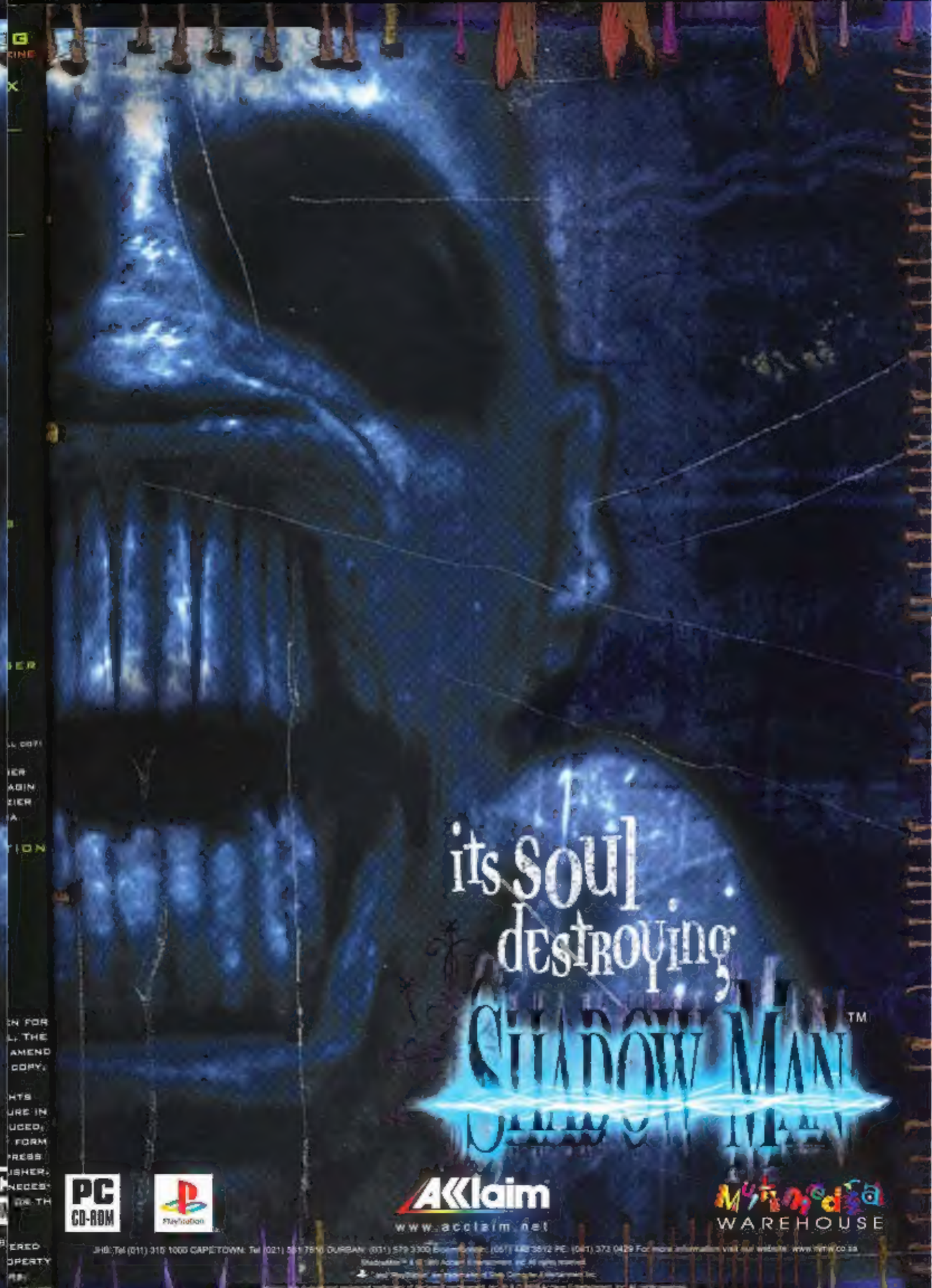

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Homeworld is set to revolutionise real time strategy gaming. See what Storm has to say: pg 32

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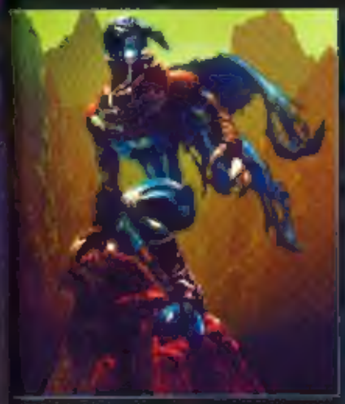
Action is the watchword on this month's CD



cover cd

DEMOS

Homeworld
BattleZone II
Darkstone
Driver
Jagged Alliance 2
Mig Alley
Prince of Persia 3D
Rally Championship 2000
Rogue Spear
Septerra Core

MOVIES

Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver
Unreal Tournament
The Sims

PATCHES

Delta Force
Dungeon Keeper 2 v1.51
Fly! V1.01.77 Beta
Hidden & Dangerous v1.2
Jagged Alliance 2 v1.0

EXTRAS

BattleZone Wallpaper
Dungeon Keeper 2
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Homeworld Screensaver
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For many long years, the Lord of the Rings has been considered the definitive work of fantasy fiction. It's author, John Ronald Reuel (JRR) Tolkein, is considered the father of modern fantasy fiction by all who read it. This amazing tale, which took twelve years to write, was first published in 1949, as a follow on to the also well known The Hobbit. The world of Middle Earth was, and still is, one of the most complete settings ever created by an author. It captured the hearts and minds of all who sojourned there, by way of the novel, and is still ever popular to this day. Tolkein's work has also been captured in popular entertainment, including films and role playing games. Now, however, Sierra FX is working on a new computer gaming experience: an on-line role playing game set in Tolkein's amazing fantasy world. To find out more about this game, it is vital to check out www.middle-earth.com. As web sites go, this one is one of the best we've seen. Just from a plain look point of view, this is beautifully put together. The entire site looks like it belongs together, yet there is a wonderful non-conformity to it that keeps it fresh and new, no matter which page you visit. Navigating the web site is simple, with the designers obviously having put a lot of consideration into ease of use. But what makes www.middle-earth.com such a wonderful web site is the absolute wealth of information to be found on it. There are very few reference works about Tolkein's world that are as complete, yet easy to read and entertainingly light in approach. Full details about all the regions of Middle Earth can be found here, as explained by "natives" of the areas. These are flavourful and interesting insights into the world that the new game will be set in. Each region page has various links of interest, dealing with topics pertaining to the regions in question.

> The Road goes ever on and on
> Down from the door where it began
> Now far ahead the Road has gone
> And I must follow if I can
> Pursuing it with eager feet
> Until it joins some larger way
> Where many paths and errands meet
> And whither then I cannot say
>
> - Fellowship of the Ring

Aside from the usual FAQ's, billboards and such that always populate sites of this nature, a very interesting and thorough biography of JRR Tolkein is also provided for those who wish to learn more about the brilliant man behind Middle Earth.

With a web site like this to judge by, it is quite certain that we can expect big things from the game when it finally surfaces on our shores. And, quite honestly, it's about time that someone undertook a project based on Tolkein's work. Of course, hats off to the brave souls that have undertaken this truly enormous venture!

NAG's Favourite Websites of the Month

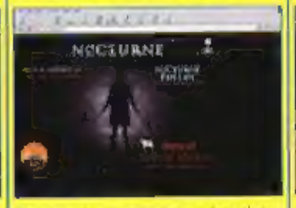
http://www.rally98.com

So often, web sites dedicated to games get rather tiresome. More often than not, they contain just a few pictures and tons of press releases and hype. This site contains all of the above, but the true beauty of it lies in the vast amounts of pictures and in-game artwork available for browsing. There are several different categories of pictures available for perusal, making the site wonderful in terms of promoting the in-game graphics. The site is nicely constructed and easy to navigate. Copious options present themselves to the visitor, in the form of a link bar near the top of the page. This is not the most attractive way to navigate a web site, and we have seen far more exciting things done with site maps and the like, but it's clear, concise, and, above all, it works! This will certainly be one of the hottest motor sport titles of next year. Get the scoop at www.rally98.com.

http://www.e3.net

Here's a site dedicated to gaming that takes a slightly different slant on things. Instead of being dedicated to a single game, the site is a resource related to the recent E3 exhibition that took place in Los Angeles, California. The site is FULL of information for gamers to make use of. However, one of the most interesting pursuits is not in the game related topics, but in the various industry scoops that the site presents. Although E3 is very certainly a thing of the past, there are still several interesting things to find out about the greatest Electronic Entertainment show on earth. Check out the awards pages to find out which games are bound to be brilliant, or take a look at the various exhibitions that took part in the show. Sound bytes, pictures and more make this site the next best thing to actually walking those hallowed exhibition halls.

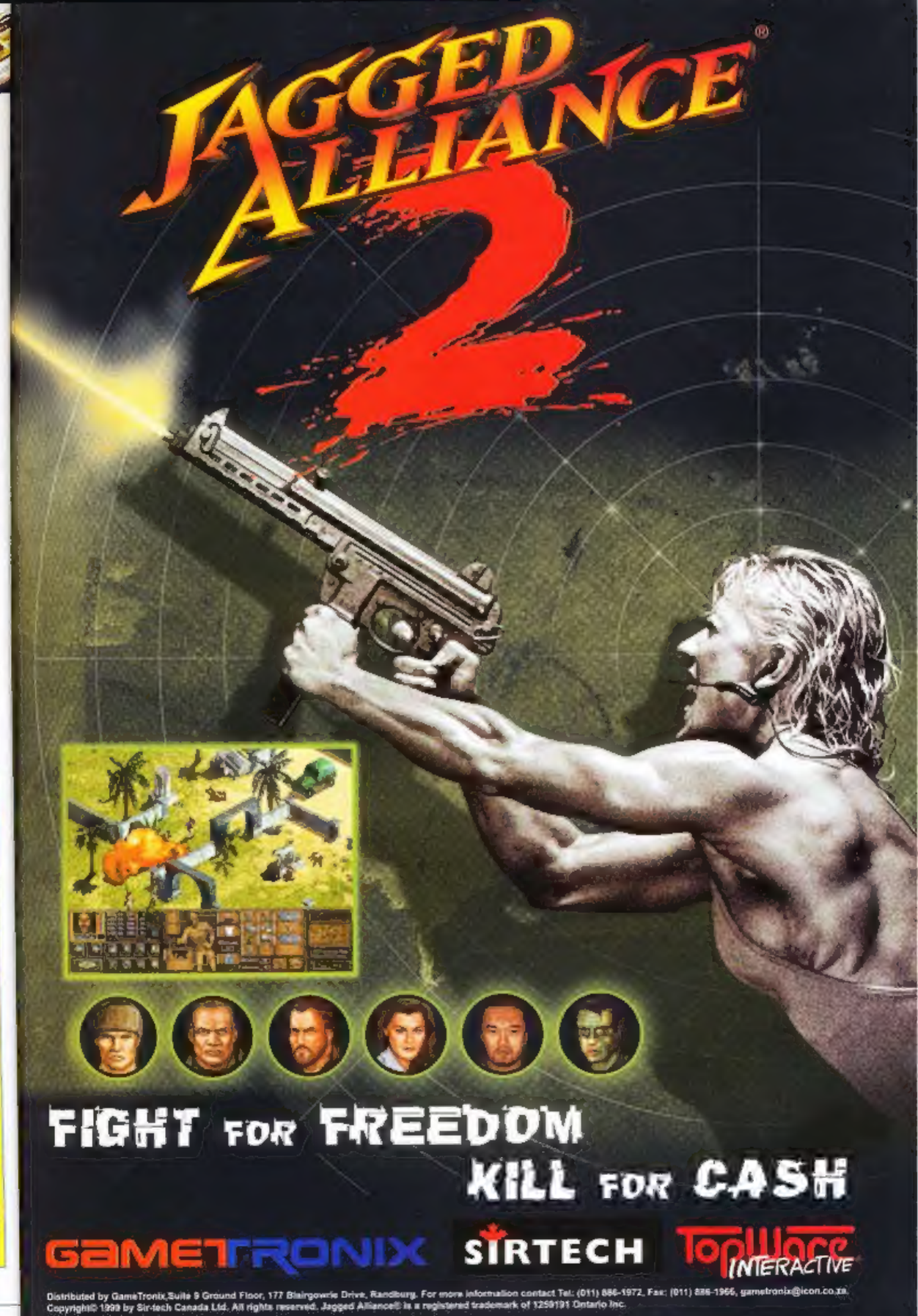
http://www.nocturne.co.za



Every so often a game comes along that pushes the envelope just so much further than its competitors. One such game is Nocturne, a dark adventure into the world of the unknown. This is most certainly a disturbing investigation into the dark side of life. Nocturne is an engrossing, scary tale guaranteed to raise goose flesh on your skin and make you look over your shoulder more than once. As with most developer sites, this site is full of screen shots, press releases and similar information, the sole purpose of which is to promote the game and create hype. But, judging by the previews listed under the press link, the hype is all well deserved. It seems that people around the world are incredibly impressed by this stunning piece of software. This is a beautifully eerie web site with tons of information about Nocturne. Be sure to stop by during your next surfing session.

http://www.playstation.co.za

It's finally here an official web site for the South African PlayStation gamer. I was primarily impressed by the front page, although a little empty, the few animations ran smoothly and it is not congested like some web sites these days that give you so many decisions you don't really know where to start. Three simple categories Play-Pen, Play news and Play to win are presented conveniently on the page, with a pop up main menu bar in the heading bar. This menu features many links to the different features of the site, these include a section containing an up to date cheat list, a well-composed top ten list with the basic plot and player actions for all ten games and a rather short catalogue of PlayStation clothing. Any visitor can see at first glance that this site is still young due to its lack of content in some sections, but it definitely has potential.



UNREAL - TO LET

The powerhouse 3D engine behind the incredible first person shooter, Unreal is attracting keen development interest from the most unlikely places. In addition to independent game developers, the engine is currently being used as a platform to host virtual tours through ancient and historic buildings, there is even a martial arts training program that relies on the engine as its virtual dojo. The most diverse usage so far has to be Unreality, an advanced architectural design program that uses the engine as a visualisation and presentation tool when showing off commercial real estate to potential buyers. The main reason why Epic's Unreal engine is such a sought after development platform is its flexibility, making it an obvious choice for programmers who don't want to spend eighty percent of their time creating a new engine from scratch. Besides the juicy graphical splendour the engine offers - it also brings to the table sound networking code, artificial intelligence and realistic texture mapping. All these out-of-the-box features allow developers to spend more time on creating atmosphere, story line and graphical effects.

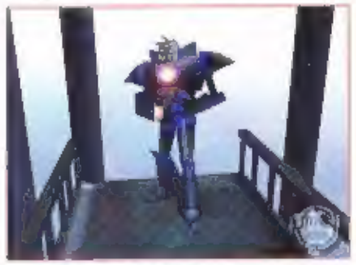
NEW CHIPS FROM S3

Sigh, we've only just finished spending our hard-earned cash on the current crop of 3D accelerators and already the next wave of expensive technology and innovation is about to break onto our cash-strapped shores. S3 has announced a new chipset, the Savage2000 that makes and details all sorts of elaborate and hard to understand statements and specifications. The very stripped down basics look like this: 128-bit memory support, 64Mill of memory, resolutions of up to 1600 by 1200, 32-bit colour depth, full DVD and DTV support, and so on... The list is long and distinguished but as always we'll have to wait and see what the other 3D chip manufacturers are up to before passing judgement. In the meantime go and have a look at http://www.s3.com for all those technical specifications that no one ever understands. In other related news, Diamond Multimedia should be the first retail board available with the new chip set, imaginatively

called the Viper 2 series, which will probably come in two different flavours to correspond with the two different models of the new Savage2000 range, the Savage2000 and the Savage2000+. We'll check it out when it arrives.

TUROK: RAGE WARS

Acclaim has launched a new web site for the next game in the Turok franchise. The site is visible on any clear day at http://www.turok.com. Acclaim has focused heavily on the multiplayer elements of this new game while still delivering heart pounding single player action to the gaming masses. The single player aspect will feature a performance dependent mission tree along with advanced enemy AI. Currently there are four new multiplayer game modes on offer and around 36 deathmatch maps as well as a new



training option. The game will have around seventeen different characters to play, fourteen of which can only be unlocked in the single player mode. Besides characters there will also be twenty-five player skins, nineteen ranks, over fifty medals and sixteen weapons to play

with. In addition to all this there are a few power-ups on offer including invisibility and stone skin. If you're tired of playing against computer controlled creatures and have no friends handy for a quick multiplayer skirmish then you can take on up to six computer controlled multiplayer 'friends' in a fierce fight to the death. Considering that the last instalment in this series was a cracking good title we have much to look forward to, coming soon...

KURT IS BACK

MDK 2 is almost upon us, which is good news for fans of the first game, a weird but compelling action adventure with the coolest sniper mode ever. This next game is still going to follow the bizarre and humorous style of the last one but the strange news is that none other than development team BioWare will be making the game - the same BioWare that put Baldur's Gate on the map. In the game, the same team will be returning to battle the foul aliens, including that crazy flying dog with an appetite for destruction and Kurt, the king of the snipers. The game is due for release as soon as it's finished and we'll be picking it apart just for you!

BLACK & WHITE

No one needs to introduce Peter Molyneux, formerly of Bullfrog, creator of the original Dungeon Keeper and inventor of the god game genre. He's been very quite for the last few months setting up his small development house, Lionhead Studios and is currently developing Black & White, a game that promises to do for real time strategy titles what Populous started for God games. Described as an artificial life simulation your entire interface is represented by a disembodied hand, spells can be cast, creatures disciplined and you can

even move through the game world without ever having to touch the keyboard. If that doesn't sound innovative enough then consider the 3D engine that allows you to zoom from cloud height right down into the middle of a village, add to this a special 3D glasses mode and you have something quite spectacular. Your 'units' will be made up of any local wildlife you can persuade to join your side including apes, cows, tigers and other strange and exotic fauna. Is anyone drooling right

now? Well sorry you'll have to wait until next year, around March, but if the first Dungeon Keeper is anything to go by expect it to another four years time when you'll haul out this issue and laugh at this unusually accurate, from a chronological point of view, news item.

FINAL FANTASY ON PLAYSTATION 2

SquareSoft has confirmed that there will be a Final Fantasy for the PlayStation 2 (as if there was ever any doubt). The interesting thing is that the game will cost around $40 million to produce - setting a new record that in turn should result in an awesome game. Can there be anything better than playing any Final Fantasy on Sony's new dream machine... nothing comes to mind!

IN THE DAN FOR DOOM

Don't hold your breath while you wait for the release of the movie, Doom, according to a number of sources the movie of the game has been officially canned. John Carmack told reporters that TriStar Pictures let the option on the project lapse and also went as far as calling the couple of scripts they read, awful.

WARCRAFT III SOON!

In a not so surprising move Blizzard have announced their next big game, Warcraft III. The news was met with mixed opinions considering that this next

instalment in the Warcraft series is making a drastic departure from the Warcraft we all know and love. The game is carving its own genre, the role-playing strategy title where instead of base building, resource gathering and army massing you'll end up controlling a small group of adventurers as they undertake quests and engage non-player computer controlled characters. Blizzard is quick to stress that Warcraft III isn't going to be like any other role-playing game out there and will involve plenty of exploration, interaction and bloodletting, saying that the game is still essentially a strategy game, only different. Some of the more impressive features the title promises include, six different races with their own unique qualities, an engrossing and detailed environment with wandering monsters, temples and weather effects. Incredible skeletal and skin animation, advanced design tools and improved multiplayer aspects are also listed. The game has already been in development for over a year and is set for release early 2000, more news at http://www.blizzard.com. Watch for a monster preview in NAG soon.

DIRECTX 7.0 LATE, AGAIN!

After a number of announcements, promises and pure desperate speculation it seems that Microsoft's latest DirectX, version 7.0 is going to be delayed, again. The application protocol interface (API) should arrive on the scene by the time you read this, we hope. The API was due for a debut launch at this year's ECTS trade show, but due to a number of undisclosed issues did not. Developers and gamers alike are anticipating this new release for a number of reasons including the fact that the new version will support Creative Lab's environmental audio extensions and also feature support for S3's texture compression algorithm. What this all really boils down to is that you can expect better playing, sounding and looking games in the not too distant future. Just remember to update those hardware drivers or all of Microsoft's hard work and effort will simply pass you by unnoticed.

RUN THEM DOWN, AGAIN

The controversial computer game series, Carmageddon is about to be joined by another release going by the name of Death Race 2000. Besides the obvious movie tie in this one promises to pull no punches in the artful but tasteless business of running down pedestrians and wildlife for points. As usual with anything that has subtitles or numbers in the title, a sequel should offer some improvement over the last effort and not only graphically either. The biggest new feature is a massive boost in the artificial intelligence department, in which your opponents are more organised, and will often hunt you down using group tactics. The infamous pedestrians have also received a brain boost and will now interact with their environment, crossing roads and huddling in terrified groups. Unfortunately, the game is only slated for release sometime during the middle of next year so until then keep those fists clenched on that steering wheel - relief is almost here.

WESTWOOD IS MAKING A NOISE AGAIN

Amazingly enough, so soon after the release of their long awaited title Tiberian Sun, Westwood have announced their latest project. Set in the Command & Conquer universe, Renegade, formerly known as the Commando Project, will be their attempt at cracking the

popular 3D action genre. The game will be a third-person action game (with no puzzle solving or ledge leaping) that will see a lone commando taking on all the bad guys in whatever mission he finds himself in, using devious tactics to outsmart the enemy. The commando character will also be able to capture enemy vehicles including tanks, armoured personal carriers and even harvesters, although it's hard to imagine anything exciting about driving around in a harvester, you'll probably just get lost and drive right into the enemy base. The game should arrive sometime next year, but in typical Command & Conquer fashion, that could be anytime in the next few years.

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Point Blank 2 (PSX)	R 349.99	R 369.00	None	None
Castrol Super Bikes (PSX)	R 459.99	R 460.00	None	None
Jagged Alliance 2 (PC)	R 299.99	R 299.00	NA	NA
FA Premier League Stars (PC)	R 199.99	R 199.00	NA	NA
Dungeon Keeper 2 (PC)	R 299.99	R 299.99	NA	NA
Aberlan Sun (PC)	R 299.99	R 299.00	NA	NA

*Includes Memory Card

RELEASE LISTS

NEW AGE GAMING TAKES NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ACCURACY OF THIS INFORMATION. ANY OF THE RELEASE DATES MAY BE CHANGED IF THE DEVELOPER DEEMS IT NECESSARY. THE ONLY OFFICIAL SHIPPING DATE THAT MOST DEVELOPERS GIVE THESE DAYS IS, "WHEN IT'S DONE!"

PC RELEASE LIST

OCTOBER

01 - Age of Empires II - MICROSOFT
01 - Giants - INTERPLAY
01 - Odium - MONOLITH
01 - Star Trek: Klingon Academy - INTERPLAY
01 - Tonic Trouble - UBI SOFT
07 - Army Men: Toys in Space - 3DO
08 - MS Flight Simulator 2000 - MICROSOFT
11 - MtG Interactive Encyclopedia - TSR
12 - Alpha Centauri: Alien Crossfire - EA
12 - Comanche 4 - EA
12 - Septerra Core - MONOLITH
12 - USAF: Jane's - EA
15 - Asheron's Call - MICROSOFT
15 - Battlezone 2 - ACTIVISION
15 - Heroes Millenium Edition - 3DO
19 - Ace Nevada Casino - HASBRO
19 - Delta Force 2 - ELECTRONIC ARTS
19 - NASCAR Revolution SE - EA
20 - Wheel of Time - GT INTERACTIVE
22 - Family Game Pack Royal - 3DO
22 - Grand Theft Auto 2 - ROCKSTAR GAMES
25 - Team Fortress II - SIERRA
26 - FIFA 2000 - ELECTRONIC ARTS
26 - Monopoly II - HASBRO INTERACTIVE
26 - SU-27: Flanker 2.0 - MINDSCAPE
28 - Planescape: Torment - INTERPLAY

NOVEMBER

01 - F-18 Super Hornet - INTERPLAY
01 - Hired Guns - PSYGNOSIS
01 - Nocturne - GOD
01 - Trivial Pursuit NASCAR - HASBRO
02 - Interstate 82 - ACTIVISION
02 - Need for Speed: Motor City - EA
02 - NOX - EA
02 - Quake III: Arena - ACTIVISION
02 - Tachyon: The Fringe - NOVALOGIC
08 - Force Commander - LUCASARTS
09 - Ultima: Ascension - ORIGIN
12 - Rising Sun - TALONSOFT
16 - Sim Theme Park - ELECTRONIC ARTS
16 - Slave Zero - INFOGRAMES
22 - Age of Wonders - GOd
22 - Monopoly Casino - HASBRO
22 - Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation - EIDOS
23 - B17 Flying Fortress - HASBRO
24 - Warcraft Battle Chest Platinum - SIERRA

PSX RELEASE LIST

OCTOBER

01 - Mission Impossible - INFOGRAMES
01 - Test Drive 6 - INFOGRAMES
01 - Off-Road Racing 3 - INFOGRAMES
01 - Rainbow Six - SOUTHPEAK
05 - Formula One 1999 - ACTIVISION
12 - CyberTiger Woods Golf - EA
12 - Final Fantasy Anthology - EA
12 - Metal Gear Solid VR Mission - KONAMI
12 - Tony Hawk's Skater - ACTIVISION
12 - Warpath: Jurassic Park - EA
13 - Army Men: Air Attack - 3DO
15 - Army Men: Sarge's Heroes - 3DO
15 - Crusaders of Might & Magic - 3DO
15 - Fighting Force 2 - EIDOS
15 - Trickin' Snowboarder - CAPCOM
15 - Tron Bonne - PLAYSTATION - CAPCOM
18 - Messiah - INTERPLAY
19 - Alien Resurrection - FOX INTERACTIVE
19 - Crash Team Racing - SCEA
19 - Dune 2000 - EA
21 - Grand Theft Auto 2 - ROCKSTAR GAMES
26 - FIFA 2000 - EA
26 - Grandia - SCEA

NOVEMBER

01 - Darkstone - TAKE 2 INTERACTIVE
01 - Earthworm Jim 3D - TAKE 2
01 - Men in Black - ELECTRO SOURCE
01 - Railroad Tycoon 2 - TAKE 2
01 - Superman - INTERPLAY
02 - Cool Boarders 4 - SCEA
02 - Knockout Kings 2000 - EA
02 - Road Rash Unchained - EA
02 - Spyro 2 - SCEA
02 - Wu Tang - ACTIVISION
09 - Gran Turismo 2 - SCEA
09 - Ready 2 Rumble Boxing - MIDWAY
09 - Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2000 - EA
10 - Resident Evil 3: Nemesis - CAPCOM
15 - 3D Stunt Track Driver - MATTEL
15 - Panzer General Assault - MINDSCAPE
15 - Shadow Tower - AGETEC
15 - Spec Ops Stealth Patrol - TAKE TWO
16 - Konami Rally - KONAMI
16 - Missile Command - HASBRO
16 - Tomorrow Never Dies - EA
16 - Toy Story 2 - ACTIVISION
22 - Tomb Raider 4: Last Revelation - EIDOS

During the final put together of this issue we had a fresh face office guest, Daniel Botha. As part of a school project he had to find a 'real' job for two weeks, and he decided that *something* at New Age Gaming would be the sample career for him, for reasons we still cannot fathom. Part of the job at any magazine obviously involves a little writing* so without further ado, here's his effort...

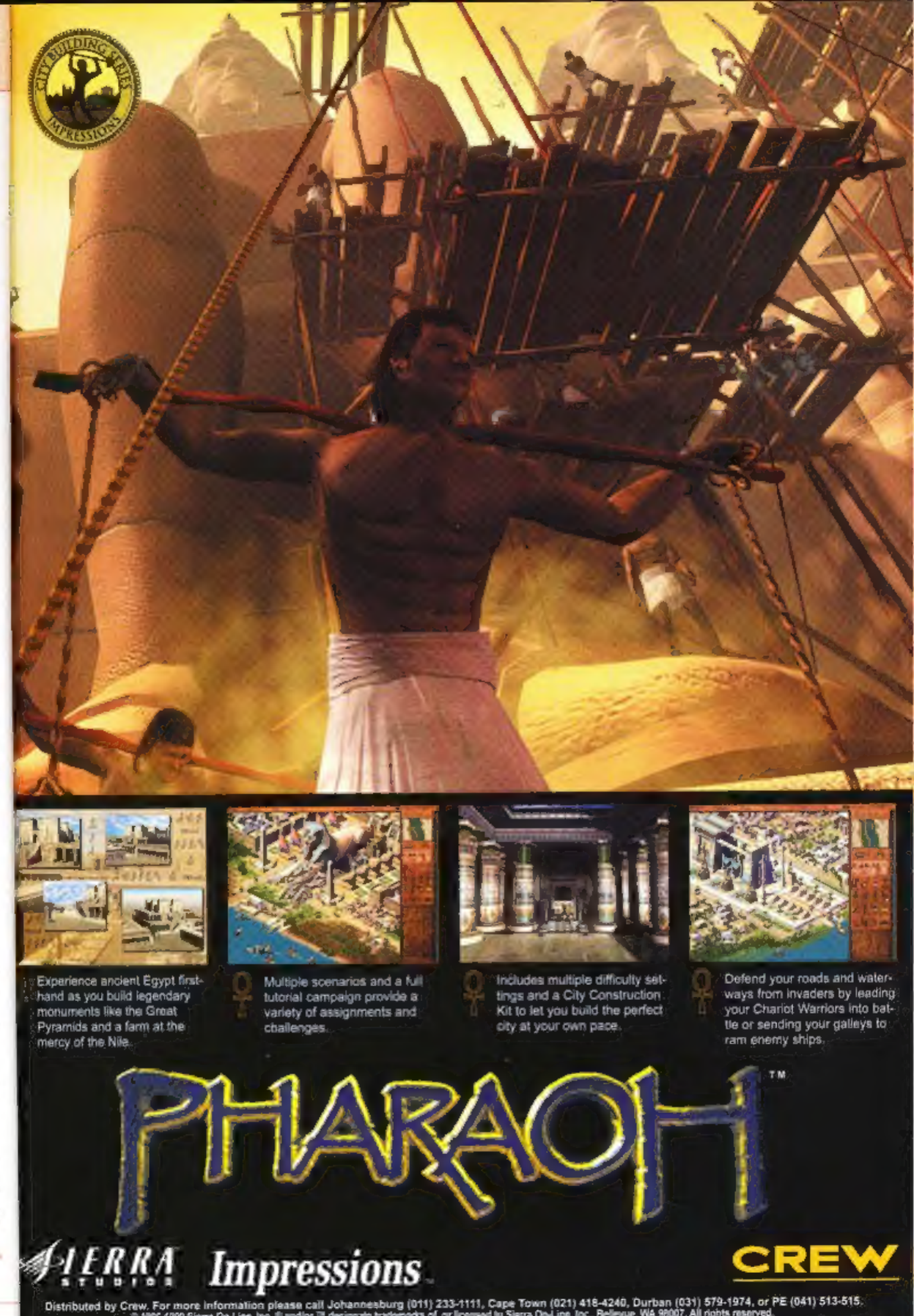
**Some would say that New Age Gaming also as responsibility for the following article and will not refer the correspondence with readers about homosexual spending habits the irresistible computer game charms of...Ed*

MY TWO WEEKS AT THE NAG OFFICE

(The true life story of a South African youth in extreme situations)

It seems like a year ago when I was ecstatically dancing around the room after reading Big Ed's e-mail stating that I had been given a job for two weeks at the NAG office. I immediately phoned my friends to tell them that I actually had a job that I was looking forward to. Unlike some of my peers who, while I write this are answering phones, balancing cheque books or trying to avoid having their hand bitten off by a rabid dog. And so it was with a rapidly inflating head that I handed my job form to my teacher, stating that I had a job at the best magazine in South Africa. I just couldn't hold in that sadistic laugh when my good friend disclosed that he would be working at a vet, where he had to sign a form stating that the vet held no responsibility whatsoever for any injuries or loss of body parts occurring during the two week period. He was told that he would be handling the animals that were brought in to the vet, regardless of size or mental condition.

The following day was to be the first of many trips from Benoni to the NAG offices in Randburg. I don't actually know what I expected to find, but basically I pictured a tall building with people running around in suits and ties and bowing to Big Ed. What I found was nothing of the sort. On arrival I was shocked to find a seemingly informal house with no apparent activity in it. Nevertheless I sucked in my gut and prayed that I was not going to be shot in the head by some gun totting fool who owned the property. It only took one look at the shelf across the room bursting with games to tell me that I had come to the right place. Shaking hands with the staff was very nassuring, as I was sure I was going to be hopelessly underdressed in my T-shirt and pants *[what are you trying to say? Ed]*. After a short while I became familiar with all the members of the NAG family and the highly qualified office guard cats, NAG and Big Boy. The random jobs that were given to me were relatively easy but I could make no mistake of the dedication and importance of each team member and their jobs. It became apparent that without everyone working together as a team and each person doing their job to the best of their ability, the magazine could never be produced as it is. I realised that it is not the building or the dress system that makes a productive office, but the dedication and commitment of each team member. These two weeks gave me a huge insight into the fine art of a "computer entertainment magazine" and I never will forget the many things I have learned here. I would like to thank New Age Gaming for offering me this opportunity and I would like to give my apologies to my school C.B.C Boksburg for not returning to school, I don't think I'll be able to face going back.



Role Playing Rumble

Our foul mouthed colleague RamJet delves into the controversial issue of whether PC Role Playing Games on computers is actual role playing.

Any comments or replies (or general slating) can be sent to rampage@nag.co.za

While standing waiting for an inevitably late bus, I happened to engage a youngster in a conversation. The lad, somewhere in his mid teens if the angry acne blotches on his face were any indication, was one of those types. You know the kind - the ones who wear jeans with the crotch between their knees, backward baseball caps and strange dog chains at their sides (the reason for which I still have to fathom). What would possess someone to wear pants fifteen sizes too large, accompanied by a Rottweiller's choke chain is far beyond me. But I digress. Our conversation meandered from topic to topic until it finally came to rest on computer games. "So," I said, "I assume that you play quite a lot of games then?" "Well, like, ja, like, fully, like, broo," was his response. I am under the impression that he was answering affirmatively; I took it as such anyway. It is a marvellous talent that today's teenagers possess - the ability to insert the word like in every possible position in a sentence. But I digress yet again. After a few seconds he added, "I, like, really, like, like, like role playing games, you like make out, broo?" "Oh really," I responded, lifted by the thought of having found a kindred spirit. "What do you play? Dungeons & Dragons? Call of Cthulhu? Vampire?" "I dunno those, broo. Were they like, made by the guys who, like, invented, like Baldur's Gate?" A cold realisation dawned on me. I was obviously talking to a completely uneducated cretin. Which by way of a long meandering example sort of leads me to my point. There is absolutely no way that any computer game can ever hope to aspire to the status of a role playing game. Never. No way. Real role playing games, like those three that I mentioned to Mr Rottweiller-in-my-shorts, would never be able to be played on a computer. No developer has the talent, facilities or ability to create a true computer based role playing game. It is just not possible. Why, you ask, ready to begin sending me really nasty e-mail. If you don't know, perhaps I can introduce you to Mr I-can't-tell-my-pants-size. You've got a lot in common. However, before that, I shall give you the benefit of the doubt, just in case you had a really poor education and don't really know what role playing games are supposed to be.

A true role playing game is a work of imagination. Everything takes place in the player's mind, where anything is possible. Everything is spoken by the players, who co-operate to create a rich, full tale. It is a social activity by nature, where people actually play roles (hence role playing games, dummy) by representing their characters, much as an actor would play a part. They actually surpass the boundaries of a game, and enter into the realms of the arts. They take true skill, thought and imagination to play, because they are limited only by the player's minds. So how can anything played on a computer rightly be called a role playing game? I enjoy computer games immensely, but this fact has always escaped me. These games, which are solidly plagiarised from real role playing games, spoon-feed the player every piece of information needed to play. It takes no imagination to play them. You see everything, you hear everything, and you are told everything. This alone goes directly against the grain of what Gary Gygax, the guy who actually invented role playing long before 286's were a twinkle in their creator's eye, intended. And you don't even play a role in a computer game. Yes, you may get two or three choices, but the true freedom, scope and scale of a human being's imagination can never be emulated by a mere PC programme. All you do while playing a PC game is click on the option best suited to your current mood. You don't have to plan, scheme or manipulate your way to the conclusion of the tale. All that you are really doing is piggy-back riding on someone else's imagination. Which is what certain game developers do in the first place. Take, for example, a very popular fantasy based computer game that came on the market not so long ago. A good game, yes, but while everyone was marvelling at it's nature, the true role players were pointing out that virtually every word had been scalped from the Advanced Dungeons and Dragons rule books. This was done with AD&D's permission, granted, but that hardly qualifies what was nothing more than an unmitigated work of binary plagiarism. And, even then, the game in question could not even hold a candle to the bright light that is true role-playing. But what really bites my ass is the fact that people start getting all catty and stupid when you tell them that they wouldn't know a role playing game if it kicked them in the nether regions. These sterling examples of intelligence vehemently defend the fact that computer games are role playing games, full stop. And it gets even worse. I have run into several of these creatures who even call themselves role players. They actually have the bald faced temerity to state that they have been playing role playing games for blah years, and that they are experienced role players. That is a badge you don't get to wear, buddy. Spending what amounts to years of relying on someone else's imagination does not a role player make. Instead, it creates a slug with no ambition to use his God given abilities to think, imagine and create with his mind. The games are not to blame, of course, and neither are the developers. These guys are only in it for the money, which is pretty acceptable in this day and age. No, the ones who have to bear the brunt of real role players are the little maggots who claim to be what they're not. Get real, people. Call them adventures. Call them puzzle-solving games. Call them logical interactive tales. But please, don't, like, insult role playing games more than you, like, already have.

RAMJET

jUSt cHARTs

As we enter the final Christmas stretch it seems that the spring freshness in the air is creating a demand for the cricket titles on both the PC and PSX. World Cup Cricket 99 holds strong on the PC and Brian Lara Cricket works its way back into the pole position on the PSX. Now that Tiberian Sun has hit, no matter what the opinion, its selling like crazy as it enters the local PC charts straight in at number 3. New additions to the PC Charts are Outcast and Hidden & Dangerous with Half Life still showing signs of mass support in South Africa. On the local PSX charts we have two obvious additions in the action based Syphon Filter and the horror filled Silent Hill. Tekken 3 once again shines as it enters the local PSX charts once again with the older Heart of Darkness and Gran Turismo bringing up the rear. The International PC charts is being pummelled with new titles as Tiberian Sun, Jagged Alliance 2, System Shock 2 and Darkstone all make an appearance. The International PSX charts look very similar to last months except a new leader in Final Fantasy 8. Till next month.

Local PC Charts

Position	Name	Last Month	Total Months
1.	World Cup Cricket 99	1	3
2.	Age of Empires Gold Edition	2	2
3.	C & C Tiberian Sun	New	New
4.	TA Kingdoms	4	1
5.	Aliens vs Predator	3	1
6.	Dungeon Keeper 2	5	1
7.	Half Life	9	3
8.	Star Wars Racer	7	1
9.	Outcast	New	New
10.	Hidden & Dangerous	New	New

Local PlayStation Charts

Position	Name	Last Month	Total Months
1.	Brian Lara Cricket	4	7
2.	Metal Gear Solid	1	3
3.	Driver	2	2
4.	Syphon Filter	New	New
5.	Abes Exodus	10	2
6.	Silent Hill	New	New
7.	Tekken 3	Re-entry	Re-entry
8.	C&C Retaliation	8	3
9.	Heart of Darkness	3	2
10.	Gran Turismo	5	9

International PC Charts

Position	Name	Developer/Distributor
1.	Baldurs Gate	Interplay
2.	Alpha Centauri	Electronic Arts
3.	Heroes of Might & Magic 3	New World/3DO
4.	Half Life	Valve/Sierra
5.	Jagged Alliance 2	Talonsoft
6.	C & C Tiberian Sun	Westwood/EA
7.	System Shock 2	Looking Glass/EA
8.	Darkstone	Delphine/EA
9.	TA Kingdom	Interplay
10.	Might & Magic 7	New World/3DO

International PlayStation Charts

Position	Name	Developer/Distributor
1.	Final Fantasy 8	Square
2.	Driver	Reflections
3.	Star Ocean	Tri-Ace/Enix/Sony
4.	Metal Gear Solid	Konami
5.	Syphon Filter	Eidetic/989 Studios
6.	Tomb Raider	Eidos
7.	Ridge Racer Type 4	NAMCO
8.	Gran Turismo	Sony
9.	Ape Escape	Sony
10	WWF Attitude	Iguana/Acclaim

Multiplayer Competition

Command & Conquer Tiberian Sun

5 x Copies
5 x T-Shirts

Courtesy of Electronic Arts Africa

HOMEWORLD

10 x Copies

Courtesy of Crew

HALF-LIFE

10 x Copies

Courtesy of Crew

WIN

NAG's Multiplayer Competition makes it easy for you to win with over R7500.00 worth of prizes and T-Shirts.

A simple question this month, all you have to do is name which item you would like to win and post your answers to NAG/Multiplayer Competition PO Box 2748, Alberton, 1449 or e-mail it to comp@nag.co.za.

BACKCHAT

Thank you to everyone who wrote in this month, unfortunately we cannot reply to all of the letters, but we do read them all. You can send your letters and e-mail to the addresses on the postcard. Please remember to include all your details when you write in or we can't send you your prize should you win. Don't ask us to change your prize or magically convert it into cash. As always, the Editors decision is final and that's that.

Well done to Emanuele Lemme who wins our letter of the month - keep the questions coming. Until next month...

Backchat
PO Box 2749
Alberton
1449

letters@ncag.co.za

Cool Jab dudes

I am not writing this letter so it can get published or anything [Oh, sorry, Ed] I would just like to know the kind of qualifications you guys at NAG have, as I would really like to be doing something like that one day. I know its hard work but it must all pay off at the end. I am currently finishing school so I would like to know what kind of course you would recommend me taking. I was thinking IT, along with a course in journalism maybe?

David Borchardt
Irene

I honestly don't think we could come up with a single qualification between us, although Soul Assassin won a colouring-in competition about a year ago (even though he lied about his age). In essence you need to be able to put together an English sounding sentence and be able to use words with more than a single syllable. A firm background in computers is essential, perhaps not as far as knowing Microsoft Exchange inside and out, but it'll help seeing as we still can't figure out which continent what e-mail address belongs with or is that to?
Your study route thinking is correct but remember the job market in this field is limited so have a back up. I wonder what would happen if we ran a competition just to see who could come up with the best amateur gaming magazine, let me just think about that for a while... maybe in December...
Ed

He shoots...

Looking at your reply to Willem Grobler's letter in the August issue of NAG, I take it you don't like negative letters so I'll try and keep this letter as positive as I can. I see that people who write in to comment on your scoring system always get a 'No, we want to keep our scoring system the way it is' remark from the Ed. I don't think my letter will change the system but I hope that at least it'll keep you guys thinking. So here goes. I really think that by adding the six scores (graphics, sound etc.) together and dividing it by six is an inaccurate and unfair scoring system. After reading the letter from Daniel Polakow (April issue page 38) I think he has a very valid (although confusing) point. Some things are just more important than others for example, sound versus playability or graphics versus control. This also depends on the makers of the game and what they are trying to accomplish. An example of this is Aliens versus Predator where the reviewer even states that the maker was putting the emphasis in the action and playability rather than the story, so the story doesn't matter too much. But then the story gets the same importance when you add the scores and divide by six. Another issue deriving from this is the N/A factor. Most sport games don't have a story so they get a big fat N/A for that slot in the scoring section. But then what happens when a sport simulation does have a story, lame as it might be? Then say it gets only 45% for the story. This brings down the average just because it does have a story. But if it doesn't have a story, it will get a good score because the total of the scores will only be divided by five instead of six. And look at Mankind: it gets a N/A for sound! Who wants a game without sound? But if you gave it a 0% for sound instead of N/A, it would bring the average down by quite a bit. So if all the magazines have a scoring system like this then the game developers would be lazy and never put stories or sounds in games because of the N/A factor. A simple solution to this would be to keep the six score system but have the final score based on what the reviewer thinks it should get and not based on the average of the six scores. I can go on forever with reasons and examples but I think (no wait, let's just say: I 'hope') you get my point of view.

Quintin Pan
E-mail

I don't dislike negative letters at all, the problem is that some people don't usually have all their facts in a straight line and I feel compelled to point these little 'inconsistencies' out. Now due to the fact that this is a public platform so to speak and I have the last say doesn't mean I'll shoot everything that crawls across my desk, I encourage negative letters provided they are constructive and have a point, like yours (or so you think). Now the scoring system - it is after all one sixth of the mark, let me illustrate. Let's say you gave a game a straight 50 in all scoring fields, you'd end up with a mark of 50. Now increase one of those to 80 and leave the others at 50 the total score ends up at 55, hardly a huge leap now is it, especially when you consider the gap individually. By leaving out the story and dividing by 5 we still get to the same thing only this time things are again 'slightly' weighted, individually. So the bottom line is that in the great scheme of things, mathematical averages do work out quite well, which is why they use similar systems when rating almost anything. Often it's the small differences that don't matter when there is a big difference between a rubbish game and a good one, a few percentage points either way can only swing things into the grand status and this is where those small things matter. Can you tell I've given this some thought? If anyone would like to argue this point please by all means..., and lastly I have yet to come across a sports title with a story or a 'normal' game without a story or sound (except game correct point on Mankind).
Ed

No grip

Have you noticed that in the last few years the addictive quality of games has been slowly but surely deteriorating? Sure, there are still the occasional masterpieces like Half-Life and Starcraft, but in all fairness this aspect of gaming has been neglected. All the new games are advertised to be bigger and better but how long has it been since the last seat griping must play all night title? A year, or is it two? Remember the days of the Quest for Glory series? Those were the types of games that you could not stop playing till they were finished. An addictive game doesn't need the latest graphics engine or even the best story (these help, but they aren't necessary) it just has to start well, carry on well throughout and then end well. I can give you hundreds of examples of older games: Ultima series, Doom, Quake, Command & Conquer, Dungeon Keeper, Theme Hospital and so on. How many of these are new games, DK2, Grim Fandango, Heroes of Might and Magic 3 maybe. For example I can't picture sitting down all night to finish Pod Racer or Worms Armageddon. Sure, they have good graphics, eye candy and the rest, but they have no staying power, they will keep you interested for a week or two and then you'll get bored of the level you can't beat, or just the game itself. I've played and finished Starcraft and Command & Conquer over and over again and still will for a long time to come. When it comes to first person shooters, which in my opinion is the most disappointing genre of all, what are we getting for our hard-earned money? Lately, nothing.

Ben Buhler
Kyalami

I can go even further back and cite examples like the original Wizardry on the Commodore 64, or what about the first time you docked with a space station in Elite... pure heaven. Addiction, playability and enjoyment in days gone by, the self same questions that plague your every waking second are also the very same questions that have been posed to the best and worst out there and it seems that nobody has come up with a good answer yet. The best possible explanation I can think of is summed up in the word, nostalgia. Nothing ever seems as good as what has already passed before, it's an old humanism and nothing rings truer than the old saying – they don't make them like they used to. Games in the past have set a standard that no one can ever challenge today because in the past we used our imagination more than we do with each new release today. Your imagination is always going to be better than what you can see, hear, touch and feel which is why you can read the same old novel over and over but quickly grow tired when watching a really old, but fondly remembered movie, it's called getting old. I'm open to any comments on this subject - do you have a better explanation?
Ed

The fountain of originality

The other day I was thinking, just how much have games changed, really changed? Forget the graphics side. How much would you say? Think back to the beginning, Doom, Quake, Unreal, Half-life... um, Warcraft, Starcraft, the Command & Conquer series, Total Annihilation... Compare sports titles, oh, and the thousands of flight simulators. Thanks for reminding me, the endless supply of driving games. If you had to undress Outcast and Shadowman it's basically just more Tomb Raider. All these games are basically the same. Wait, before you lash out at me it should be known that I love playing these games and just like you I trade in hours of sleep to play them. The question I'm asking is what has happened to the originality? Remember Battlezone, what a brilliant but highly underrated game. Why didn't we enjoy it, was it too different or were we too scared to leave what we know to play something we don't? I'm sure that if gamers gave it a chance they would have enjoyed a thorough gaming experience. The developers know how the gamers act and are reluctant to take the risk of this happening, so they pump out games they know we will play. As a result we have a market flooded with clones. Not all developers can afford to create a game that dares to be different. If it does, this game will venture out into a world of risk, if it happens to survive then bonus, imagine the benefits that the developers and us gamers would reap. The bigger companies should be the ones to take these first brave steps, they've got the financial backing, but are they scared that their names will be dented or of a drop in sales? Perhaps for the companies the concern is their image or the amount of cash they can milk out of us gamers. Is the passion of making games still there? Maybe I'm being unfair, harsh or expecting too much. Just how can a shoot-em-up or driving game change? Is it possible for there to be other genres waiting for some vivid imagination to discover them? Has originality been ditched in favour of a better financial return and reputation? I feel these games that aren't following the trend are few and far between. Has the fountain of originality run out?

Justin Reabow
E-mail

It seems that these days you let out there are taking your games very seriously, which is a good thing. It's nice to see the gaming community taking a long hard look at what is on offer and condemning the endless procession of dull, mediocre and clone titles. Originality and addiction are just two of the qualities in the hot seat this month and these days a game needs to have a lot more on offer than the latest graphical special effects to impress. Ever since the beginning of the graphical revolution we've all been easily wowed by all this impressive 3D technology, to such a degree that we've forgotten what makes up a good solid game - until now. The idea here is to keep asking questions like this and eventually someone will pay attention. The very worst that can happen is if nobody does anything about it, but you have to agree that some of the titles lined up for this festive season look good enough to eat, original or not!
Ed

Out for a duck

Often I contact a computer game retailer or supplier enquiring about a new game, which I know has been released overseas or have seen an advert for. On these occasions I am either told that they have never heard of the game or that there is always a long delay before games make it on to the South African market. I could perhaps excuse a retailer for not knowing about new releases but a supplier has no excuse, especially when they have advertised that they are going to be releasing the game. While I am strongly opposed to software piracy I believe that these shortcomings are contributing to the growth of the software piracy problem in South Africa in that many gamers find it much easier and quicker to pirate games. Some might argue that no harm is done if a game is released two or three weeks late. However, I believe that if the industry is to grow in SA then our retailers and suppliers have to start marketing games a lot better than they are at the moment. This should start with employing sales-people who know something about games and furthermore have an interest in games. I also make a call on all reviewers to be more severe on sub-standard games. For example, you were much to forgiving in your review of World Cup Cricket 99. This game is absolute rubbish. It's possible to consistently bowl the computer opponent out for fewer than 20 runs on the highest difficulty rating. The game deserves an overall score of 20 because of its great graphics. In no way can it be called a cricket simulation because it is about as realistic as a Hollywood action movie. Since the game is practically unplayable Electronic Arts or even the retailers should consider giving gamers the option of returning the game in exchange for a refund (don't worry nobody is going to pirate this game). I know this is wishful thinking but if the gaming industry is serious about curbing piracy then consumers should be protected against sub-standard games. This could be one of the ways of encouraging people to stop purchasing pirate software. The reality is that there are so many poor games being released that consumers are not prepared to buy more games or many simply turn to piracy. The situation is not helped if reviewers don't adequately trash games, which are clearly poor. Yes a game may have redeeming features but what counts is the final product. You don't buy a car if it has great wheels and upholstery but a bad engine. The same should apply to games.

Emanuele Lemme
Table View

It saddens me to hear about your dubious encounters when dealing with our local game distributors. I can't comment on this mainly because I know who to speak to when calling them, so I'm hoping yours is a simple case of speaking to the wrong person. How many times did you say? Nevertheless in most cases our local distributors don't exclusively deal with games but a wide range of other non-game related products making it difficult to dedicate teams of people to this one single aspect of their business. But keep bugging them and eventually things will improve. Regarding your scoring comments, I think the scoring of Cricket was influenced by the fact that Storm was overseas at the time. Somehow in-between rushing off to go and see live World Cup Cricket matches and loosing luggage, he sent us the 'slightly' favourable version of the review under the influence of cricket mania. We forgave him because he ended up reviewing, playing and writing the whole thing in an Internet Café in London, the things we do for you readers... We're constantly arguing about the scores some games get, so rest assured you are getting at least two different opinions on every game, one way or another.
Ed

BACKCHAT

That's no excuse

Before I continue, please excuse any spelling mistakes, throbbing headache, lack of sleep and lack of oxygen, aren't conducive to good grammar and spelling...
That mouse! We've all seen that advert, where the blood clicks the mouse on the screen, but have any of you noticed how important the mouse is when it comes to controlling games. Let me take a few classic scenes from my recent history. Scene A: Diablo - which has made a strong revival in obvious anticipation of its sequel! But back to that mouse thing... some twenty guys slicing, hacking and generally killing each other. Stop and listen... okay what do I hear... the clicking of mouse buttons, shouting and general gratuitous language about mouse failure... for those of you who are still young and pure at heart I will not repeat... Scene B: Starcraft - another favourite, people who have failed to plan and defend their bases properly complaining about the fact that their mouse is not functioning to its full capacity... So they quit... Scene C: Quake 2: Deathmatch - 8 guys and girls running around and causing carnage... oh yes people if your follies are over (why don't bother trying to explain to them how killing another person with a rocket launcher can be fun... they will never understand, and will in all likelihood philosophise about the innocence of 'their' days... sex, drugs and rock 'n roll. So innocent... Anyway the guy with the rocket launcher dies and swears cursing everything unholy for the fact that his mouse isn't working. So the conclusion I have come to is this - no matter how bad you are at a game, if you can sound convincing enough that it is the mouse to blame for your problems you can make yourself seem infinitely better. Although if you do, consider yourself in my eyes a lousy loser...

Luke
E-mail

The things people will say when they're on the losing side of any game is quite remarkable. I've heard everything from, 'I'm tired and it's hot in here' to, 'well you know I sucked at this game anyway'. What we need in this business is a little more sportsmanship, if you know what I'm saying and anyway, subtly's buying your trail of excuses, just make sure you do better next time.
Ed

Religious nuts

In my opinion your magazine is one of the best gaming magazines that I have ever read. I do admit, this was my first NAG that I have bought, and the price is surely an indication of why I bought it, but after reading it, I was so surprised that you people can get this brilliantly written magazine out on such a low budget. I mean, pop a CD in and you're well on your way to selling it for R60 or more. One question though, the name, how did you come by it? Does it in any way indicate your religion or does it purely mean, "the latest games". Anyway, keep the competition falling and keep the reviews sailing.

David Putter
Graaff-Reinet

Sometimes I lie awake at night and in between the tossing, and turning I often wonder why it is that I inevitably at some point or another during the month end up having to explain the simple name of the magazine to someone in an e-mail or on the phone. Even later into those nights and now in a much more desperate panic to sleep, I also wonder what this obsession is that people have about the name of our magazine. For the third last time, it means nothing more than what it is, a name, the latest games, new games, modern games whatever - it isn't getting any deeper than that, sorry about squashing all those conspiracy theories but that's the story. Anyway, thanks for your comments, we always try our best!
Ed

Please send all questions and opinion related questions to
Backchat
Please send all your technical questions to
Backchat Technical

If you don't send more letters we'll...

So there I was playing my pinball machine and wondering what to use as a feature in this month's article and then it hit me, shed some light on the mystical world of pinball. So, after tons of research and sifting through piles of e-mail from around the world, here is the low-down on what some gaming historians believe to be the most legendary game of all time... Pinball - AtariBaby

PINBALL

PART 1 OF AN INTERESTING SERIES IN WHICH WE SEE ATARIBABY FONDLING HIS SILVER BALLS AND STROKING HIS RUBBER FLIPPER...

When you hear the word pinball I think there are a lot of gamers out there (especially the older ones) who will recall the era when pinball machines were right on top of the gaming charts with the best of the video games. Face it, if you have never played a 'pin' you've missed out on probably one of the greatest gaming experiences of your life. Most pinball players are devoted fans, and just like video games there are certain games that are favoured by all. Most of today's games are even more complex than the System 11 boards found on Namco's Tekken III. But there were times when Pinball was played on machines that were purely mechanical, and instead of computer PC boards, electronic displays and digitised sound effects there were relays, mechanical gears and bells for sound effects. As boring as it might sound, it was one of the first forms of arcade amusement available.

Bally Bow

Records indicate that the first game of this kind arrived on the scene in 1932. Produced by a company called Bay City Games in Bay City Michigan, the first pin was Kow Tow. It was a very basic game that had no electrical bits and pieces. As a matter of fact it didn't even have a scoring feature. The player had to keep the score himself as he guided the ball in to the holes on the play-field by moving the slanted deck left or right. This was where the word Pinball really originated, as actual pins or tack nails guided the holes on the play-field.
Not long after Kow Tow appeared on the scene, Rockola, a company known for its jukeboxes introduced a game called Juggle Ball. Juggle Ball was a bit more sophisticated than its predecessor in the sense that it had a ball-launching device (generally known as a plunger in pinball circles). Play was controlled by a cue stick with which the player could influence the ball in play by using a handle protruding from the front of the machine. The game also boasted very colourful artwork.
Even though the two early games mentioned provided the player with some sort of ball control, they could in no way be said to have anything resembling flippers as they appear on games today.
Up to 1946 most pinball games relied on cue sticks, levers and deck tilting to obtain some sort of ball control. In 1947 however pinball received a serious facelift with the introduction of flippers. The impact this had could be seen as an innovation similar to the joystick in video gaming.
Williams, a pin manufacturer in Chicago founded by a gent called Harry Williams, were the first to implement flippers. Some say that Williams actually invented it. (Video gamers might recall Williams as the company who made the now classic 80's game Defender). The truth of the matter is that although Williams played a huge part in the original idea, it was ace pinball designer Harry Mabs who was working for D. Gottlieb and Co. at the time, who finally realised and introduced the idea on their game Humpty Dumpty.

1932, JUGGLE BALL FROM ROCKOLA - ANOTHER EARLY STICK DRIVEN GAME

Flipping Flippers

So the flippers came and revolutionised the game of pinball. By 1948 just about all the pinball manufacturers had some sort of flipper system in place, be it electric or mechanically operated.
Pretty soon DIY 'add a flipper' kits became available to those who wanted to add flippers to their original machines that came without. This brought problems in it's own right. Most of the operators who added the flipper to their older games sometimes had no idea where to install them and often they would be placed in such a way that the player didn't benefit at all from them being added on to the game. The second problem was that the games' dated scoring system couldn't handle the elongated play sessions. When flippers were added a skilful player could keep the ball in play longer than he could on the original game. This resulted in much higher scores (often near the maximum of what the game could register) making the setting of the replay scores more difficult for the operator. Even with these problems which were encountered when flippers were added to the pre-flipper pins, many operators and owners still felt they had no choice, especially as they could not afford to buy the new models. Flipper games became so popular with players in a short period of time that the old non-flipper games became obsolete overnight. Apart from giving the player more ball control to the game the flipper made another break through right around the world.

OLDER THAN THE HILLS

KOW TOW FROM BAY CITY GAMES - A RARE 1932 GAME THAT USED CUE STICKS FOR BALL CONTROL

In most countries gambling laws were pretty tight and there were strict guidelines as to what constituted a 'gambling device' and an 'entertainment machine'. With the early games offering very little ball control, it was argued that the game was based on pure luck! The flipper changed this as it introduced a 'skill' level to pinball. If one looks back, the flipper probably saved the pinball from being classified as a gambling device, which in turn would have made it less accessible to the gaming fraternity. This was very similar to what happened in South Africa in the late 70's when pinball's were banned from operation... but more about that later.
From 1947 until about 1951 developers such as Williams, Gottlieb and Bally all started introducing electric powered games, which in turn made pinball faster and gave more high-powered flips. This was due to the fact that high-powered coils were now used to activate the flippers and the bumpers in the game. There was one problem however. Due to how level protection circuitry on the early games most of them burned up a lot of coils, and in some cases it wasn't just the coils that burned up. Many a game went up in smoke due to over heating coils, making pinball quite a hot commodity! It was not uncommon to see a "Potential Fire Hazard" warning sticker on the back of most of the machines.
With the arrival of the first Solid State Circuitry in the mid 1970's a new breed of machine saw the light. Not only did they have built in protection circuitry against overheating and short-circuits but they had flashing lights, stronger and longer coil driven flippers and zinging sound effects. This was the first step towards pinball, as we know it today.

NOVEMBER 1947, GOTTLIEB'S HUMPTY DUMPTY WAS THE FIRST FLIPPER PINBALL GAME WITH A TOTAL OF SIX FLIPPER BUMPERS

Make sure to catch next months 'Archives' when we find out why South Africa lived in the pinball 'dark ages' for about 15 years. We will also look at the biggest selling pins of all time and look at the face of pinball in the future. Until then let me carry on 'flipping'.

ATARIBABY

UPGRADING FOR NOOBS

PART 6 - PERIPHERALS

So far we have covered everything needed to upgrade a computer except for the smaller peripherals that most people leave until last. The components you usually only realise you need when you want to switch on your creation and discover them missing. These include keyboard, mice, speakers and the like. Unlike the other peripherals personal preference is the main deciding factor in these purchases, for example some gamers totally loathe a natural keyboard while others won't play on anything less. As a matter of preference very few people will ever be swayed one way or the other after getting used to using a specific input device, the ball is totally left in your court.

Scut Assassin

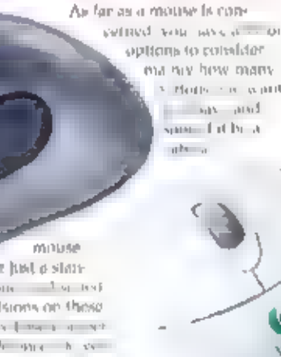
Standard Input Devices

Everybody must have a keyboard and mouse to accomplish [illegible] piece of equipment [illegible] electronically cloning. You [illegible] without a keyboard [illegible] most people opt for a [illegible] and an intelli mouse when mouse since these usually come standard with any new PC and [illegible] OEM [illegible] of people [illegible] keyboard [illegible] wrist [illegible] that you're used to using. Personally I would [illegible] but you buy a keyboard with the American key [illegible] since most of our software is based [illegible]

As far as a mouse is concerned [illegible] options to consider and say how many [illegible] and [illegible] one you intend to buy is compatible with the applications you want to use it for, especially if you still use legacy games or legacy applications.

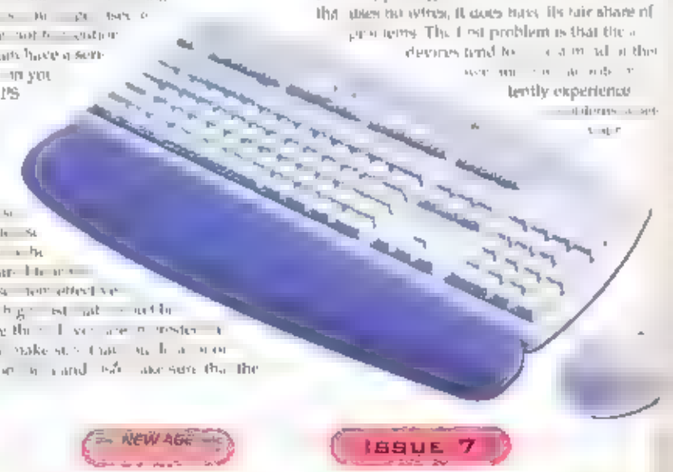
Generally most computers since the Pentium II have used a PS/2 connection port, although you can plug keyboards and mice directly [illegible] your USB port as well. Just make sure that if you do decide to purchase a USB keyboard that your motherboard's BIOS [illegible] Keyboard Support, otherwise you won't work under the MS-DOS prompt during the initial installation of a new operating system.

Devices making use of [illegible] sound appealing, or have a keyboard or mouse that uses no wires, it does have its fair share of problems. The first problem is that the devices tend to [illegible] currently experience

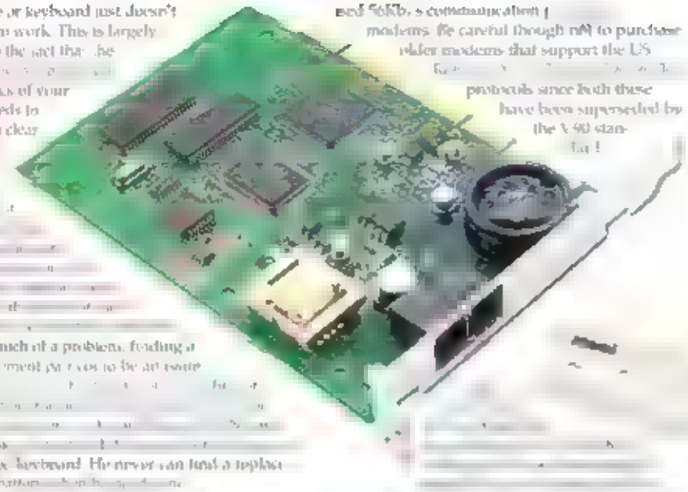


mouse
or just a stan[illegible]
must decisions on these [illegible] ever 4 buttons one should [illegible] have a mouse wheel? Generally [illegible] most people opt for [illegible] but personally I [illegible] mouse, you should stick to that same design for [illegible] mouse you're used to using. Personally I would [illegible]

There is however one major drawback when [illegible] that you'll be [illegible] but you buy a keyboard with the American key [illegible] since most of our software is based [illegible]

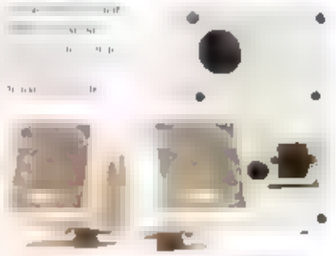


and 56Kb/s communication [illegible] modems. Be careful though not to purchase older modems that support the V.90 standard! [illegible] protocols since both these have been superseded by the V.90 standard! [illegible]



[illegible] isn't much of a problem finding a replacement [illegible] to be an issue [illegible] dilemma keyboard. He never can find a replacement [illegible] that have a [illegible] months. The most you can look for is a decent manufacturer such as [illegible] who [illegible] swap out any faulty keyboard or [illegible]

[illegible] world of inform[illegible] mation source for patches, demos [illegible] already purchased [illegible] connection of your w[illegible]



[illegible] likely [illegible] also [illegible] more of their [illegible] [illegible] a number of years and the extra money you [illegible] excellent option. The Cambridge speakers are [illegible]

Spea[illegible]

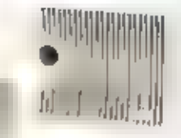
[illegible] people forget that [illegible]

[illegible] UPGRADING FOR NOOBS

[illegible] willing to pay for [illegible] surround sound [illegible] the new Dolby Digital sound standard. These speakers [illegible] made by Creative Labs and [illegible] will function well with other 4x hardware and [illegible] market as well. Altec Lansing [illegible]

[illegible] and the local distributor has pledged to support us [illegible]

[illegible] house [illegible]



[illegible] easily [illegible] lose now to the field of computers [illegible]

The casualties were high, but one of our scouts managed to make it back from Microsoft's camp, and with his dying breathe spilled the beans on their latest empire-building venture. Age of Empires II is possibly one of the biggest real time strategy titles due this year with its hypnotic blend of RTS elements and historic settings.

RAVEN

AGE of EMPIRES II

THE AGE OF KINGS

Well, it seems the Age of Sequel [illegible] with us and Microsoft [illegible] his [illegible]. All the most successful games [illegible] such worthies as Quake and Command and Conquer, are now in their second [illegible] generation, [illegible] back soon, taking [illegible] steps further, [illegible] worthy sequel. Well, for starters, it must be [illegible] with [illegible] original. That is [illegible] must be based [illegible]

[illegible] dering with Age of Empires II: The Age of Kings [illegible] about the [illegible] beta version.

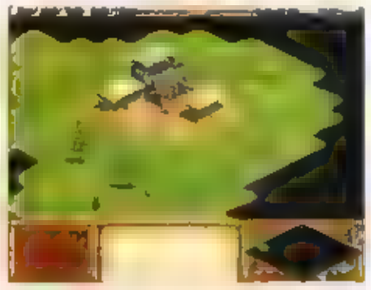
Age of Empires II will feel delightfully [illegible]

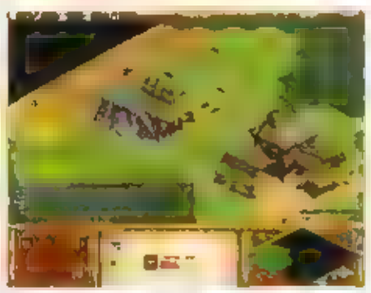
more responsive. The main view is depicted, as in the original, in [illegible] villagers that carry out the [illegible] tasks that will decide whether your hedg- [illegible] and fielding a [illegible] military force on top of that. The overall [illegible] wild boat, for the most part) and bleeching [illegible] arms. These [illegible] as in the [illegible]

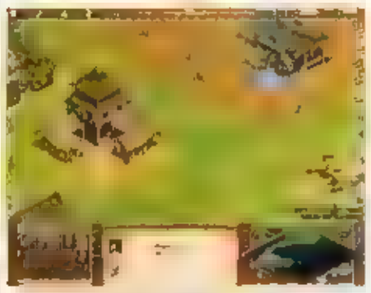
[illegible] and [illegible] mainly on food [illegible]

[illegible] also start training Nobles (the most [illegible] at the Barracks [illegible] usually after [illegible] fires to advance [illegible]

[illegible] improved in order to speed up lumber [illegible] Mining Camp [illegible]







[illegible]

[illegible] game's most powerful [illegible] the Trebuchet. This [illegible]

[illegible]

The game features 13 different races, each with their own unique strengths and weaknesses, historically speaking.

[illegible] engines, and are blessed with [illegible]

[illegible] Have a knack for [illegible] Their [illegible] enjoy better cavalry [illegible] and slightly tougher knights.

[illegible]

[illegible] mounted archers [illegible]

[illegible] Dock are also more efficient [illegible]

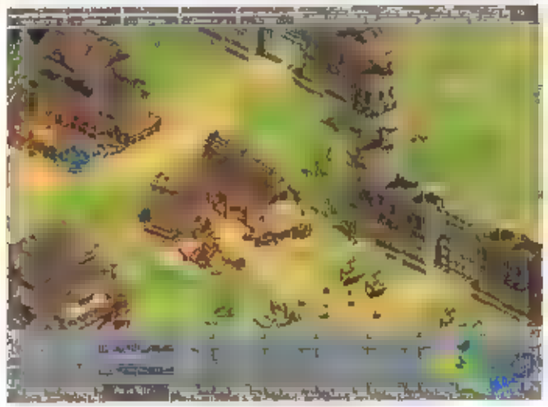
[illegible] They [illegible] buildings than other races.

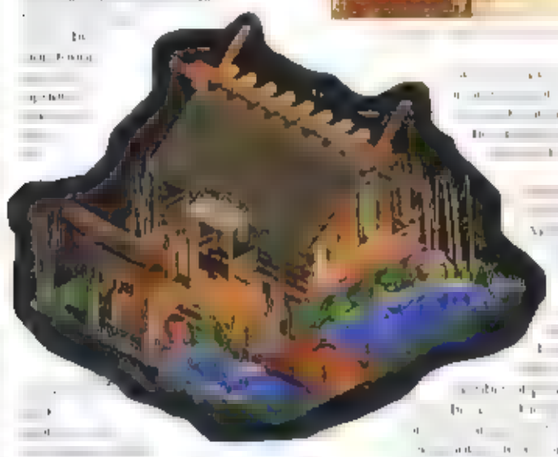
[illegible] are the [illegible] more [illegible]

[illegible] the [illegible] where gunpowder-based weapons are con[illegible]

[illegible] tough infantry and [illegible] expert [illegible] resulting in [illegible]

PREVIEWS UNDER CONSTRUCTION





The ancient bloodline was embodied 2,000 years ago just outside of Bethlehem.

1,900 years later, its dark secret surfaced in the small town of Rennes-le-Chateau.

BLOOD OF THE SACRED

GABRIEL KNIGHT

BLOOD OF THE DAMNED

SIERRA

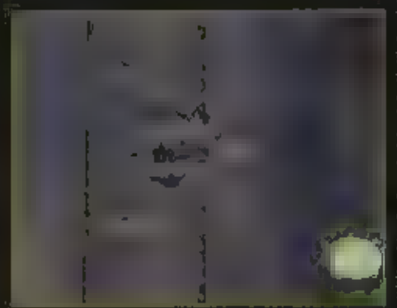
COMING SOON

CREW

It seems that the world of the PlayStation game has become a little jaded, a little stilted. Games come and games go, without much difference to them. They seem to become nothing more than a blur of games, one after the other - nothing more than the same thing over and over again. However, things seem to be changing. With the arrival of Eidos' Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver, it seems that a new age in the PlayStation game arena is dawning...and that's not to mention the PC version. Shryke

LEGACY of KAIN SOUL REAVER

It is seldom that a game like Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver comes along. Yes, there are games that make something of a difference; they are the type of games that just go a little further than all the others do. However, titles like Soul Reaver - amazingly rare in their brilliance - surpass even these. They go beyond the point of being 'good' and enter into the realm of excellence. There are not many games that can compete with Soul Reaver. Developers Crystal Dynamics and distributors Eidos have



SOUL REAVER WILL CERTAINLY CLIMB TO THE TOP

simply stunned itself in a league of it's own. So what makes it so special? At first inspection, Soul Reaver is little more than a 3D-adventure game saturated with copious violence and something of a bizarre story line. But give it a whirl - grab that controller, go on, you know you want to - and you will see exactly what we're talking about.

We'll begin at the very beginning. Before actually game play, an enthralling introductory film shows us the origins of Raziel, the strange vampire prince that the player controls while playing Soul Reaver. It would appear that Raziel is one of the favourite creations of Kain, the big honcho in vampire circles. Unfortunately, Raziel has the audacity to physically surpass his master by growing a pair of torturous bat wings (which are graphically beautiful, even to the point of being translucent). As a "reward," Raziel's wings are destroyed, and he is sentenced to be executed in the Well of Souls - a swirling maw of water that spells certain doom for vampires. However, despite an eternity of agony, Raziel survives, a shadow of his former self. The now deformed, and destroyed creature is granted a chance to exact revenge on those who betrayed him. This is where the player comes in. You have to guide what's left of Raziel through the strange, gothic city of Nosgoth in his quest to get even with Kain. So what? Big deal! Well, yes, actually, it is something of a big deal.

Although the demo we saw only provided us with one level of this enigmatic and labyrinthine city to explore, it really knocked our socks off. Hopefully the Ed will put his back on soon. What we saw was a game that surpasses anything of the sort that we've seen on the PlayStation before. Firstly, the entire myth behind Soul Reaver is stunningly thorough and highly inventive. They didn't just suck this one out of their thumbs - they put a lot of thought into it. The world of Vampires is full, rich and complex, as well it should be. For example, enemy vampires cannot simply be beaten into a pulp. Sure, tons of physical abuse does stun them, but they recover soon enough and come at you with a worse attitude than before. No, to truly get rid of these horrific creatures, you have to use Raziel's highly impressive and certainly very savage impale function - literally driving a magical stake

I'M A LITTLE LOST BUT I'LL BE IN MY WAY NOW... HUH?

which impacts directly on game play, is the fact that Raziel cannot die. I mean, he's dead already; how unlucky can the guy really get before someone cuts him some slack. However, he does expend his power, and the player has to be conscious of its levels at all times. The only way to replenish Raziel's power is to "eat" the souls of vampires. Yes, very pleasant, we know, but the game provides no end of satisfaction as you watch some vampire that you just had to murder disappearing as you snack on his very essence!

Another very impressive feature about Soul Reaver is the fact that the developers made use of a continuous data streaming technique that greatly reduces

What this means for the player is that you spend more time playing the game than waiting a cheesy "loading" screen. It's high time that PlayStation developers abandoned this aspect of playing a console game. Load times can seriously destroy the enjoyment of the game. This is thankfully not the case with Soul Reaver.

In addition to beautifully designed characters, and truly awe-inspiring background and environmental graphics, Soul Reaver makes use of high resolution graphics: 512 x 240 Vortex, to be exact, which, in layman's terms, translates into the fact that Soul Reaver looks better than most other PlayStation games. Add to that dynamic real time lighting, single skin technology, segmented skeletons, joint interpolation and over 550 polygons for the main character (300 plus for other characters) and you get something that looks almost as fluid as real life. Raziel features a huge amount of moves and techniques, all of which are imbued with something of a magical quality by the above mentioned graphic wizardry techniques.

Indeed a hallucinogenic and variable fog velvet within the levels make the world that Raziel roams in a beautiful, mysterious and above all believable universe in which to experience this game. Raziel can run, jump and climb like most other PlayStation heroes. Controlling the character is very simple, with variable camera angles thrown in just as a cherry on top. In addition to these normal movement modes, Raziel is pretty good at breast stroke, and can use his shattered wings to glide on thermals or off of high cliffs. Perhaps the best part of controlling Raziel comes when he takes on an opponent. Crystal Dynamics saw fit to include a combat auto-lock

ENTER THE MARSHAL WORLD OF NOSGOTH

ing feature - which makes opening a can of whip-ass so much simpler for the player. It keeps 3D combat simple to handle, enabling the player to concentrate on timing attacks and techniques rather than worrying about facing in the right direction. And the fact that this feature is controlled by a button means that players wanting an extra challenge can just lay off and do things the hard way. As the game progresses, Raziel learns new magical glyphs (powerful symbols that have magical effects) to aid him in his quest. However, he begins with the ability to shift into the spectral plane - a strange dimension mirroring the "real" Nosgoth. Seeing as how the entire environment changes when he enters this strange realm, the hard working developers designed each level twice, to ensure that everything is perfect in both planes of existence.

Soul Reaver features over 20 different kinds of enemies, and 12 bosses to challenge the player.

Additionally, puzzles and mysteries woven into both games play and the story line will ensure that the player is mentally exercised as well. The "real" nature of the world is further enhanced by the fact that all characters met in the game will have future reactions based on actions taken by the player. In other words, the non-player character remembers what Raziel did when they met previously and, and acts accordingly. This is a stunning feature of the game, no doubt, but it does mean that you have to be sensible. Rashel won't get far if everybody wants a piece of him! Raziel may also recruit some of the NPCs he meets to help him on his quest. Another wonderfully thoughtful idea that Crystal Dynamics came up with is what they describe as a transparent user interface. What this means is that aspects like inventory screens have been excluded from the game. A nice thought, but players may find the fact that Raziel can only carry one object at a time a bit disturbing. In truth, a little inventive thinking is all that's required taking care of this 'problem'. We could carry on singing the praises of this game for several pages yet. The plot is stunning. The game play is exceptional. The graphics are excellent. The soundtrack and effects are

IMPALING FIRST YOU STRIKE 'EM... THEN YOU LIFT 'EM! UNFORTUNATELY FOR THEM HALF OF THE 'LIFT BIT' IS THE BIT WHERE YOU PUNISH

exhilarating. The list is endless. But we have to save something for when we finally get to review Soul Reaver. Let's just say that its possibly the most impressive 3D adventure we've seen yet, as far as PlayStation goes - and the PC version will probably earn a similar response. This is certainly a game to be on the look out for. Clever developers will soon realise that Soul Reaver is not just another game. It is also a yardstick that will be applied to the world of PlayStation 3D-action adventure from now on.

GENRE: 3D ACTION ADVENTURE PLATFORM

DEVELOPER: CRYSTAL DYNAMICS

PUBLISHER: EIDOS

SUPPLIER: SILICON KINEMATIC INTERACTIVE
TEL: (01) 1445 2000
EXPECTED RELEASE DATE: NOV - DEC 97

INTERNET:
WWW.E-D.COM

The competition for Racing Simulations has always been a fierce and highly competitive arena in the gaming industry. Over the last few years the Racing Simulation has taken a back seat to the Rally Simulation as the competition hots-up for the pole position. New technologies are being created to enhance the playability of these daredevil, balls to the wall, Rally Sims. Gamers have always been fascinated with the genre because of its death defying use of the motor vehicle to hurl oneself around unknowing corners with little than a map and co-driver. Capitalising on this desire are Europress who have always had the ambition of creating the ultimate Rally Simulation, and by the looks of it, they are not far from it. - Storm

Rally 99 CHAMPIONSHIP

EUROWHOT

ALL GAMES HAVE GOOD GRAPHICS

MUD IN YOUR EYE

GENRE: RALLY RACING SIMULATION (PC)
DEVELOPER: MAGNETIC FIELDS
PUBLISHER: ACTUALIZE
SUPPLIER: T C M WAREHOUSE TEL: (01) 312 1067 EXPECTED RELEASE DATE: DECEMBER 99
INTERNET: HTTP://WWW.RALLYCHAMPIONSHIP.CO.UK

THEY SAY THE DEAD KNOW NO PAIN...
LEGACY of KAIN
SOUL REAVER
THINGS ARE ABOUT TO CHANGE
EIDOS
PlayStation

Being the commander of a highly experienced group of mercenaries can be a headache at times. Selecting the right people for the mission, buying the necessary equipment, and especially balancing the accounts to remain a profitable organization can be daunting to say the least. To make things worse, the company that employs you, leaves you and your team for dead, deep in Africa...welcome to Shadow Company.

Mennoch

Shadow Company

LEFT FOR DEAD

This ambitious upcoming title from Interactive Magic combines great qualities from titles such as Myth and Jagged Alliance to produce a game like nothing we've seen before. The game plays out in the year 2010, where the world is run by business corporations. Terrorism threatens the well being of these companies, and the trend of the time is to get rid of the terrorist groups through hiring mercenary groups. In Shadow Company, you command your team of skilled mercenaries through various locations in Africa to other parts of the world after being

I THINK WE'RE LEFT THE DESERT, ISN'T AFRICA

betrayed by the Granite company. Your motivation is to survive, and to make money to keep your team equipped and battle worthy. Like the saying goes, no bucks, no Buck Rogers.

ANGLES AND PERSPECTIVES

Shadow Company is played from a third person perspective through the use of a moveable camera system, which works quite well. The camera perspective can be moved independently from your mercs, can rotate, change angle, or be played to follow a selected character. Your team is controlled in a fashion similar to real-time strategy games such like Commandos: Behind Enemy Lines. The game itself is fully 3D, and features scenery reminiscent of the levels found in Hidden & Dangerous. The levels in Shadow Company are detailed with all kinds of real world objects, and tanks, helicopters and other vehicles are totally interactive and useable by your forces should they have the skills to pilot them. Mercenaries need weapons, and Shadow Company caters for a wide variety of tools to equip your team with, from assault rifles, pistols, sub-machine guns, shotguns, sniper rifles, LAW rockets, frag-grenades, smoke grenades, and a whole lot of other items necessary to survive in a combat environment. At the start of a mission, the player must hire mercs, buy weapons and ammunition and other equipment the need to complete their goal. Should they run out of ammo in a mission, your team can scavenge weapons from dead soldiers or buildings in terrorist camps. The fun part comes in when a merc hijacks a tank for that extra bit of firepower. The terrain is everything but flat, and by crawling over a hill, your team will have a great firing position while benefiting from the ultra cover as Shadow Company employs realistic line of sight.

Campaigns consist of various missions each with multiple goals. Some missions may require your team to destroy some kind of terrorist camp, while others might involve the goal of assassinating a terrorist leader. The open structure of Shadow Company allows the player to complete these missions in whatever suits their style of play. For instance, on an assassination mission, you have the choice of destroying the plane in which the target is supposed to escape in, switch off the lights of the runway to prevent reinforcements from dropping in, or ambush the poor fellow on his way to the airport. As commander, the player chooses the landing and extraction zones, depending on what the mission plan calls for. Missions will take place in prison camps,

DO AND TAKE OUT THOSE SAM SITES WITH THEIR BULLETS

GAMING MODES

Shadow Company will also feature 16-player multiplayer over LAN and via the Internet, where opposing and co-operative modes will be featured. For a title in an alpha state, most of the features are already in place and the game is highly functional and fun to play. Where the modern trend in gaming follows the first-person path, Shadow Company follows a great alternative approach which can be defined as real-time 3D tactical combat, and should be a very enjoyable title for fans of realistic combat strategy type games.

GENRE: COMBAT STRATEGY FPS

DEVELOPER: IN ACTIVE MAGIC

PUBLISHER: UBI SOFT ENTERTAINMENT

SUPPLIER: MULTIMEDIA WAREHOUSE

TEL: (0[illegible]) 3[illegible] 000

EXPECTED RELEASE DATE: DECEMBER 00

INTERNET: WWW.SHADOWCOMPANY.COM

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Cutthroats™

Terror on the High Seas

PC CD

CREW EIDOS

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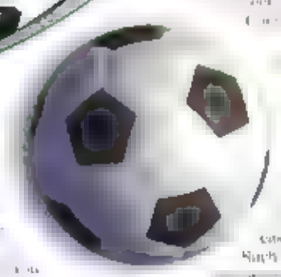
When it comes to sports titles, then we all know that EA are tops. Talking about football titles in the words of Carly Simon, "Nobody does it better." Already the media hysteria to get all the latest news, information and screens regarding FIFA 2000 is starting to build and it is only mid summer. Looking at the recent set of football action games everyone is waiting with baited breath to see what new features, innovations and compelling gameplay will be set to carve a new benchmark in FA's latest version.

Derek dela Fuente



Game Features

Exclusive Interview with Kerry Whalen Producer - Animation for FIFA 2000

1) What exactly does an animation specialist do?

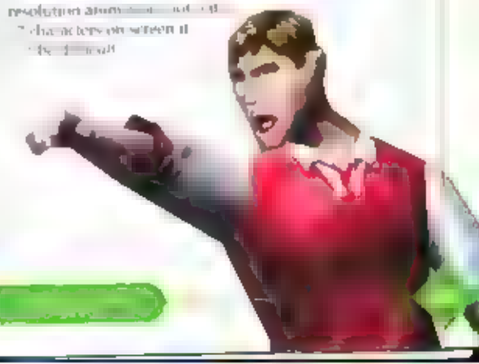
Terry:

2) In terms of animation, what's the main differences between FIFA 99 and FIFA 2000?

Terry:

3) Is there anything you'd like to do on PlayStation which you couldn't do because of hardware limitations

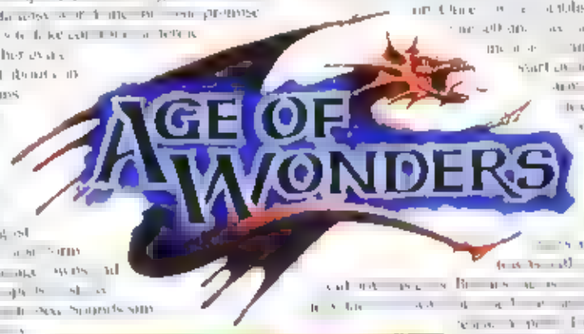
Terry: This is possibly the big

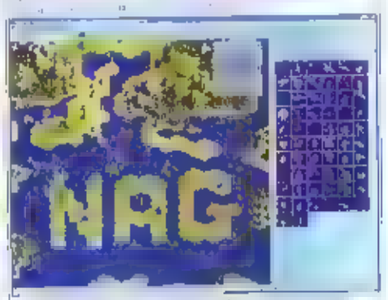


PREVIEWS UNDER CONSTRUCTION

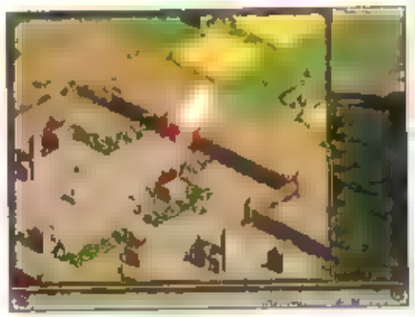
Some people argue that the turn-based strategy genre has been reduced to nothing more than an empty husk, just waiting for someone to come along and throw it away. That might be true in some circles, but when considering a game like Age of Wonders you can't help wondering if there might still be a little life left outside the realm of real time strategy. Red Tide

H





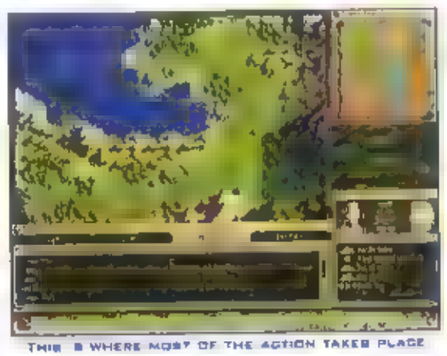
LEVEL EDITOR



THIS IS WHAT THE QUICK BATTLE OPTION LOOKS LIKE

WHAT'S P

TINY LITTLE TASKS



THIS IS WHERE MOST OF THE ACTION TAKES PLACE

REDTIDE

GENRE: TURN BASED STRATEGY RPG

DEVELOPER: TRIUMPH STUDIOS

PUBLISHER: TAKE 2 INTERACTIVE

SUPPLIER: MULTIMEDIA WAREHOUSE
TEL: (011) 315 1000
EXPECTED RELEASE DATE: DECEMBER 99

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Red Storm Entertainment

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Hype - The Time Quest is a game currently being developed by Ubi Soft with a difference. Unlike most games striving for absolute realism Hype is based on a medieval fantasy setting in a world populated by popular toy Playmobil characters, very similar to some of the Lego games that have been released recently. Unlike past games utilising Playmobil characters Hype caters for both young and old by offering a complex plot and intriguing storyline.

HYPE
Time Quest

[illegible] knight [illegible] spoilt [illegible] he highly unlikely hero three generations back in time. Once awakened by a friendly [illegible] search for a way to return to [illegible] Black Knight [illegible] how to do all. The story unfolds [illegible] Andrew's fantasy book, In that [illegible] all [illegible] the [illegible] to [illegible] search [illegible] the [illegible] the [illegible] the

NAG Rating System

39% - 0%

Are you scraping on this dreadful game isn't even worth it? Maybe the studio avoided completely to lower down to such an abysmal game just to get selling some, although unlikely scoring in the single digits might be good for a laugh, or just for doing something right after all.

49% - 40%

Very few games fall into this range. Terrible they may be, but a few redeeming qualities rescue them from dropping into the most hated Sonic titles worth a look if they sell at Rands, that they scored.

59% - 50%

Middle of the road games we think, but as we age games tend to spend far too much time like these usually end up in your Christmas stocking from well meaning but clueless grandparents.

69% - 60%

Good solid games usually some unique idea with combinations of several flaws or lacking features. These games form scoring anything below standard games or fans of the genre will probably love these titles.

79% - 70%

Does deserve how close is inside of your hearts to call buying a game that scores in this range. Good games here suffer from a lack of innovation, bad calls, laziness, or just not very inspired.

89% - 80%

Any game earning this status deserves your attention and praises, but few lack that little extra that separates it from classic status. Normally is the perfect and some come very close and here is where you'll find them.

100% - 90%

The ultimate achievement for a game is to get into the magic 90%. It represents an outstanding purchase and enjoy the type of game on offer. Also a good place to shop if you're tired of one kind of game and would like to broaden your horizons.

Calm Before the STORM

It would seem that there's not a whole hell of a lot going on in the game market at the moment. But, judging by the streams of E-mail that we have been receiving, concerning the arrival of new game titles, we can certainly say that this is a small lull before the storm of big releases hits us for the upcoming holiday season.

With Christmas scant months away the local game distributors are gearing up for a big season, with some huge titles ready to hit the market.

We here at NAG are looking forward to three or four bumper issues, stuffed full of game reviews and previews, as this huge backlog of titles bursts over our shores. Rest assured that we will be right there, and will take you along with us.

The next few months are a very exciting time for gamers the world over, with titles like Quake 3 Arena, The Sims and Gabriel Knight 3 (to name but a few) supposedly making appearances for the silly season.

Of course, it does mean that we won't be getting much sleep between now and the New Year. In fact, the lot of us will all probably be playing games in a small dark room somewhere while the rest of the world welcomes the year 2000. But those are the rigors of dedicated journalists around the world.

CREATIVE

ALL GAMES REVIEWED ON
CREATIVE LABS BLASTER PC PREMIUM SYSTEMS

Intel Pentium III processor 450MHz
Intel 440BX AGP Chipset Motherboard
128MB SDRAM memory (PC-100)
13 GB Ultra DMA Harddisk
1.44MB Floppy Drive
Microsoft Windows 98 pre-installed
Sound Blaster Live!
PC DVD 5X MPEG2 Kit with Dx2 technology
Graphics Blaster RIVA TNT 16MB AGP
Cambridge SoundWorks FPS2000 Speakers
Modem Blaster Flash56 PCI modem
BlasterPC Black Case with INFRA remote & FM tuner
17" High Resolution Monitor
104 Keys keyboard
PS/2 mouse

BLASTER PC

HOMEWORLD

Homeworld will blow your mind as it takes Real Time Strategy to a new level with a full 3D world that will take your breath away. We had no qualms about awarding our Editor's Choice award to this RTS game.

See PG 50

The Awards Ceremony

System Shock 2 PG 56

Rogue Spear PG 54

IT'S COMING!

WAREHOUSE ACTIVISION. id

The heat is something oppressive, sending rivulets of sweat running down your temples, back and creating a sheen of moisture on your top lip. Mosquitoes buzz around you constantly, raising itchy red welts on your skin as they feed off of your blood. But you dare not swat them - the slightest movement or sound, event in the thick foliage of this jungle, could betray your position to an enemy that wants to see you dead. It is a game of cat and mouse, of hunter and hunted, where the role of the latter falls to the one who manages to see the other first. Then you see it - a small movement. But it is still large enough to belie the presence of your enemy. You shift slowly, painstakingly, bring around your automatic weapon. You line the sites with the base of his skull, inhaling once, twice, before squeezing the trigger. As the shot resounds through the trees, sending flocks of birds from their roosts and pushing the butt of the rifle hard against your shoulder, you silently muse: "another day, another dollar..." Welcome to the world of professional mercenaries.

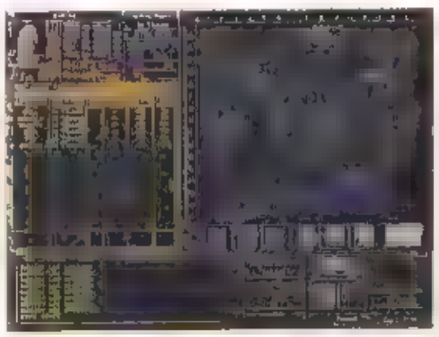
JAGGED ALLIANCE 2

agged A l ance 2 has been a l g time om ng n the l st installment of this s metric strategy r to e play ng rb d, you took control of a mercenary squad sent o save a sm l is nu from dom nation Now in the next part of the tale you enter nto this cut-throat world again This t me, r the country depends upon you and your army of hand picked mercenaries to ture it from the mach nations of an evil d ctator Welcome to s nny Arulco.

p them ng h ben to b battles, k

mach ne around But the performance on the 66 is questionable at best, particularly as far as sound and smoothness of graphics are concerned Guessing that the game might have been incorrectly specified, I moved onto a creative Blaster PC, which is, need ess to say, far above the game's recommended specification. However, I encountered the same problems on that

ter PC as did on the 166 MMX This can only be a problem in programming there s mply s no other exp nation. The game also has a lot of load t me This is not much a problem because the levels are fairly long, encountering any enemies. The game s sound s also on the suspect side Aside from problems with jerkiness the sound g ts very poor dur ng cut scenes a most as though the sampling rate is far too low for decent quality achieved. And speaking of cut scenes well they are a little disappointing to say the least A though the



are comprised of sc n the dialogue are

ably very detailed the image game and l ked g rs Ta ly, with the loca

I d practically have been el minated entire ly Luckily the story line behind Jagged A l ance 2 is fairly predictable Rather than l ng it weak, I would prefer the term "B Grade Being such a forgiving person who supports numerous charities (like the "Shryke Benevolent Fund" and "Shryke F nancial Aid Organisation") I searched the game for good points And thankfully, the good does outweigh the bad to a degree The best thing the game has to offer is a totally enthralling game play aspect Get into this one, and the hours will pass like minutes while you search and foes are l pointed out their errors n judgment by improving their physical ve at on system Yes, I m tarnished (stop whining) but the

are guaranteed to o f most of all dead the a with mor bar detrimenta s with your upgrades is quite l ck mercenary is dealt with individually as s stance (standing, crouched ng down nd attacks are determined by as well as a fixed number of movement points with each turn with which they must perform al ons moving, firing, and changing stance, reloading Starting out the game is simple enough You ss your laptop and your budget ng n ments ps ished via your laptop (all ons le ted and by Internet (an l ted ds ground) Of course you have to watch your expenditures when starting out as lands are quite l mited, and the only sou d income during the game is what you "acquire" during your adventures. Next its on to Aru s

The game makes use of three main inter faces. The laptop is the first such interface and is where most of the in-game admin

play ts, as I stated fr om allan 2

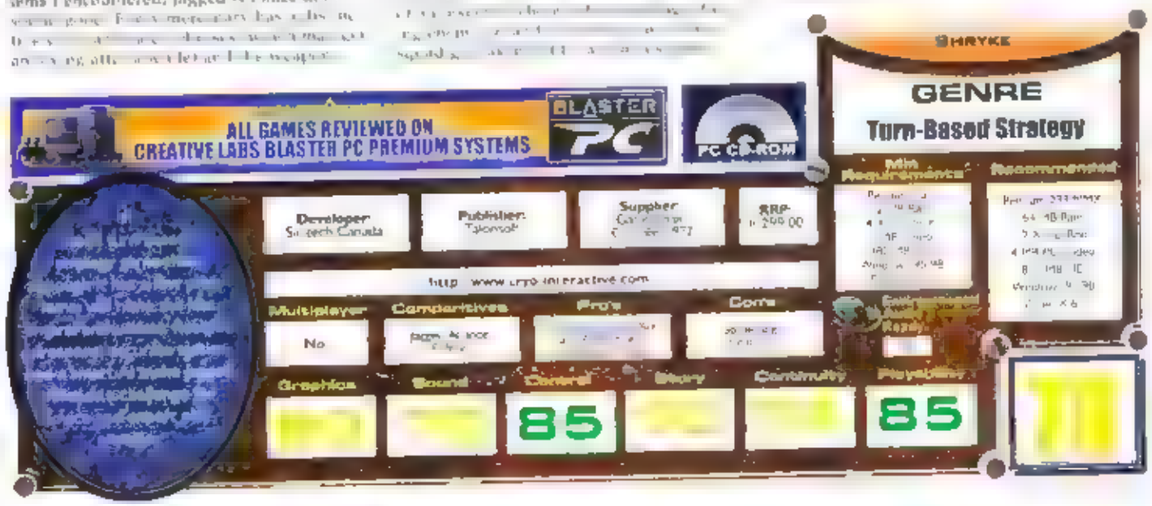
thereby enhancing the tactics behind the game It is an easy trap speak n the simple

It takes skill wits and a smattering of luck to get anywhere in this game A so, the world is fairly reactive which means ha

to make a

die hard strate act an and don

games like Fallout and Jagged Alliance (although the effects aren't as wacky as those in the latter). The and quite realistic, and the s out and set-up makes it easy to play and s pot enemies, objects and other d terest Outside the s l problems I encountered, Jagged Alliance does s game Each mercenary has a s n and weapon, all of which can be upgraded



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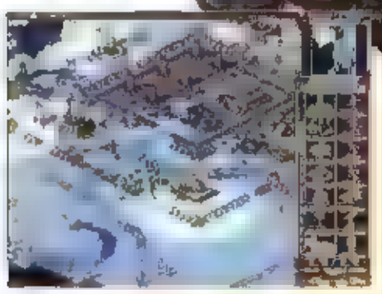
Westwood Studios and the team that put together Dune 2 are widely regarded as the fathers of what we today call the real time strategy. Acceptance of this new genre was limited but sparked a significant enough interest, which led to the development of the virtual gaming revolution that was Command & Conquer. Numerous 'copycat' games arrived on the scene following the success of C&C, the only notable exception to the plethora of me too titles was Blizzards effort with Warcraft II. In the same way that Heretic drew interest in a Doom world by giving the player a fantasy setting and moving away from the lone marine scenario. Now riding high, Westwood released Red Alert, a game which many say finally perfected the art of real time strategy gaming. Blizzards answer to this was Starcraft, and again the playing field changed, Warcraft II in space with three different races to choose from firmly put Red Alert in its place. In amongst all this we've seen this compelling genre evolve from sprite based units to polygons in Total Annihilation and then later, Age of Empires showing us that our planets history could also be drawn from when putting together a real time strategy game. One common trait exists through all this diversification and innovation and that is the founding principles set in stone by Dune 2 and perfected in C&C and Warcraft II. No matter how outlandish or pioneering they try to be, all the others are just subtle variations on the common theme. Currently we have such a rich and diverse range of titles to choose from that Tiberian Sun enters the market with far to much to prove and the marketing hype behind the game, and no matter how good it might be it's bound to disappoint many people. - Red Tide

COMMAND & CONQUER TIBERIAN SUN

When dealing with a game this big it's hard not to be swept away by the hype surrounding the title, the [illegible] of the company behind the game and lastly the eager anticipation suffered while waiting for the final release. It's been [illegible] long and the hardest part is being objective and unemotional when playing a game. A tough ask for any fan of the genre, impossible for anyone who has played the previous titles from the series. The important question is: how is the game? Tiberian Sun conjures up an image of the perfect real time strategy game in anyone's mind. Fantastic [illegible] game, it's graphics, the fantastic movies and the multiplayer aspect have created a beast no one could ever hope to tame, and as I write this (1 screen shot was published on the Internet. Before getting to the deconstruction, the game can accurately be summed up in this way - Tiberian Sun is a poor man's picture of Red Alert - simple. In many ways it is like Dune 2000 is for Dune 2 - not much.

[illegible] base, harvest [illegible] mass an army and finally attack the shit guys on the other side of the map. The real time part means that everything moves, chases and bashes without the annoying click here to finish your turn process that made turn based games so famous a while ago. The strategy part, although some might argue, is to do with which [illegible] you build [illegible] and them. How you protect your base and finally form rating the enemy. Now to do it, this you need money and the commodity you harvest and trade in is Tiberium, a strange alien substance that now covers [illegible] of the globe. As this harvesting, building and attacking continues until either side wins. The control interface has you clicking on units and directing them to attack this or move there, large numbers can be commanded [illegible] what I call bolts down [illegible] playing mind [illegible] sold servers on your computer without a [illegible] mud, melted plastic and lost tank tracks.

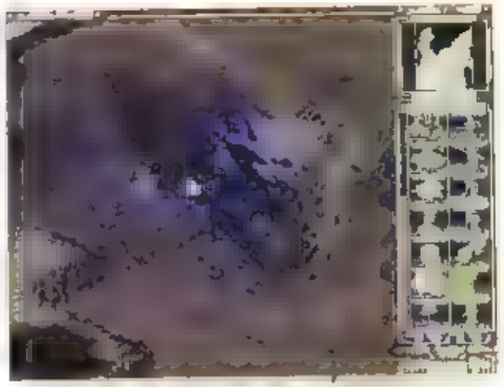
Of any game, in any genre, Tiberian Sun has without a doubt the best [illegible] video ever [illegible] on the screen. This is due to the use of the James Earl Jones and Michael Biehn plays the lead roles along with the return of Joseph D. Kucan as Kane. It is not so much they somehow capture the very essence of the game and the fact that they look stunning does nothing but help. The first time you see the mobile command centre taking off from the desert floor and vanishing into the distance you know that a high level of commitment, to quality, timing and attention to detail has been observed. I, for one, love the cold war campaign, the tone of the movies is as typical as American apple pie. Cut-scenes, [illegible] James is as impressive as ever in the role of [illegible] James is straight out of the next big Hollywood blockbuster. Michael McNeil played by Michael Biehn follows in generals orders to the letter and unlike the NOD camps he goes there guys are [illegible] going the good fight. In spite of the impressive video sequences you do end up feeling a little short changed. There are enough of them around but the majority of the segments involves short order barking sessions and people left waiting for the next audio cue. The problems seem to stem from the inability of actors to get to grips with acting in a computer game, the performances are up to standard but a small relief [illegible] something missing. The NOD campaign has its own set of movies and the tone here is de rather one of unfair conduct and policies that would have the UN up in arms. More people are shot and murdered than actually do, as it proved, it may be slightly violent at all shocking but is very cinematic, as the last again Kane plays an excellent role and don't be surprised if you see him at the local cinema circuit soon. The other set of movies in the game are pre rendered sequences, bridges exploding and build ups being initiated are all of the same high standard we've come to expect from Westwood. The story being told through the movies and sequences is intriguing and although pulls the action along nicely can sometimes be a little confusing.



TIBERIAN SUN CONTINUED

especially with the NOD campaign. The thrust component of the story revolves the Forgotten [illegible] mounds who, in [illegible] extract Tiberium poisoning [illegible] sets of the ongoing conflict between NOD and the GDI involves the mysterious alien crashsite and the on-going research and [illegible] Tiberium. Essentially the plot is a little on the weak side as much knowledge is assumed and not explained which might throw [illegible] the deep end. But for [illegible] and purposes it is brilliant and has more [illegible] that as others should follow suit because many a [illegible] too [illegible] the [illegible] young [illegible]

Of all the grand promises that Westwood made during the development of this [illegible] more exciting, things [illegible] the [illegible] used to the graphics wonders that other, older RTS games have on offer. I ought to all [illegible] play the game just [illegible] play. The one type [illegible] invaders [illegible] and where you must complete [illegible] objectives either within a [illegible] and build a base and wipe out the opposition [illegible] to do the [illegible] to all the base building but [illegible] adhere to the very last and will keep you [illegible] because each objective is unique [illegible] single player opposition is a [illegible] and the game [illegible] tactics the computer uses to try and [illegible] but it is safe to say that Tiberian Sun won't [illegible] going to be getting any awards for it.



[illegible] In one of my single missions [illegible] I sent a soldier a few feet [illegible] to attack [illegible] comrade, has hit the deck shooting he'll just stand there until you move closer. The [illegible] AI problem is that the computer [illegible] up when you've battered his base but [illegible] other you can drive a unit right [illegible] and around to the back of [illegible] and you'll be [illegible] there to do as [illegible] as possible before a few single troops wipe you out. To illustrate how the game [illegible] and how everything [illegible] here is a [illegible] has all been [illegible]

Blizzard right! I never really enjoyed the Command and Conquer series, I am more of a Warcraft comic Starcraft fan. This doesn't mean I think the game sucks, just that it was too easy in multiplayer to utilise the bombard and rush tactics. But if I come down to my indiscriminate little office chair, I consider Tiberian Sun to be both a masterpiece and a failure. As a single player entity you will battle to find any game as refined and absorbing with extensive work done on creating a movie [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] objectives. The style is still that of the old school, with almost three years of work, I think we deserved more. Many will say if it ain't broke, don't fix it. Quite frankly that's crap. We are moving towards the Millennium and with what I have been privileged enough to see over the last few months in gaming development and the advances in 3D acceleration technology, Tiberian Sun is a step backwards for the mass [illegible] market. Storm

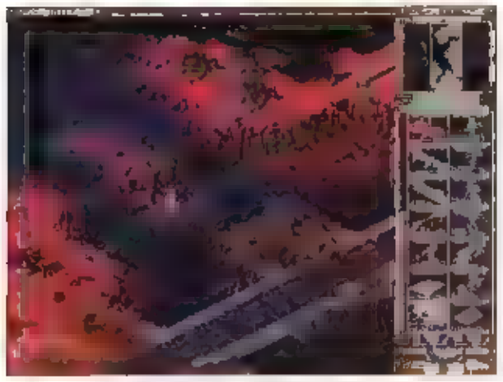
Perhaps Tiberian Sun has become another victim of the ever present hype that surrounds long awaited titles. It just seems that what was promised a so much more than what was delivered in the final product. Not to say that Tiberian Sun is a bad game, it's just that I personally expected so much more. Shayke

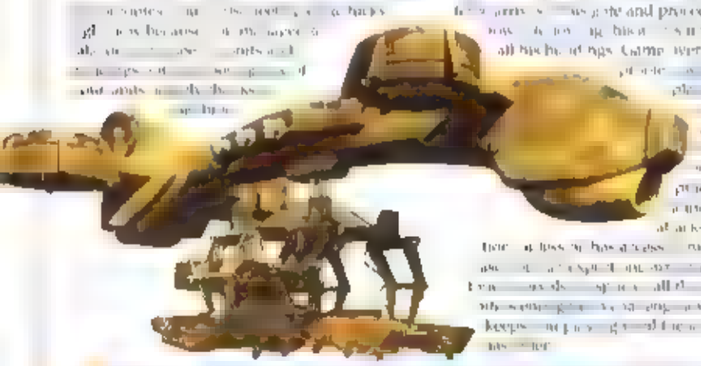
SECOND OPINION

Because everyone felt they just had to have their say on this game we've decided to humour them with their own [illegible] and a fragile egos [illegible]

I for one expected a lot more from the title and was hoping that they changed a few building details from the Command & Conquer interface like not being able to build up a base defence very quickly, especially with walls since you have to place each and every square inch of it. I think the fans would have liked a way to queue a whole wall for construction instead of re-picking with more management when you could be doing more important things like attacking or harassing the enemy. I also found the multiplayer AI a little too clever. I mean how can an enemy controlled base be capable of Nuking the crap out of you? And all of this without ever coming close to your base. It seems to see right through the cloaking device. Other than these and a couple of other flaws Tiberian Sun is an addictive game that will keep a lot of Command & Conquer fans playing for hours on end, sadly however it doesn't add any significant improvements to the Real Time Strategy genre, and can therefore only be considered an [illegible]

Westwood Studios have truly resurrected Command & Conquer with this title. The most notable aspect is that [illegible] [illegible] the original Command & [illegible] concept and [illegible] [illegible] weapons and structures are available but the entire feel of [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] all. As always, Westwood have created a polished finished product featuring an engrossing story presented by means [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] soundtrack. Tiberian Sun was designed with a heavy [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]





ALL GAMES REVIEWED ON CREATIVE LABS BLASTER PC PREMIUM SYSTEMS

BLASTER PC

PC CD-ROM

REDTIDE

GENRE

Real Time Strategy

Developer:	Publisher:	Supplier	RRP:
Westwood Studios	Electronic Arts	Electronic Arts Africa	R 299.00

http://www.tiberiansun.com

Multiplayer	Competitives	Pro's	Con's
Yes	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Min Requirements	Recommended
Pentium 166, 64 MB Ram, 4 X CD Rom, 200 MB HD, Windows 95/98, DirectX 6	Pentium II 266, 64 MB Ram, 8 X CD Rom, 200 MB HD, Windows 95/98, DirectX 6

Graphics	Sound	Control	Story	Continuity	Playability
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	85	[illegible]	[illegible]

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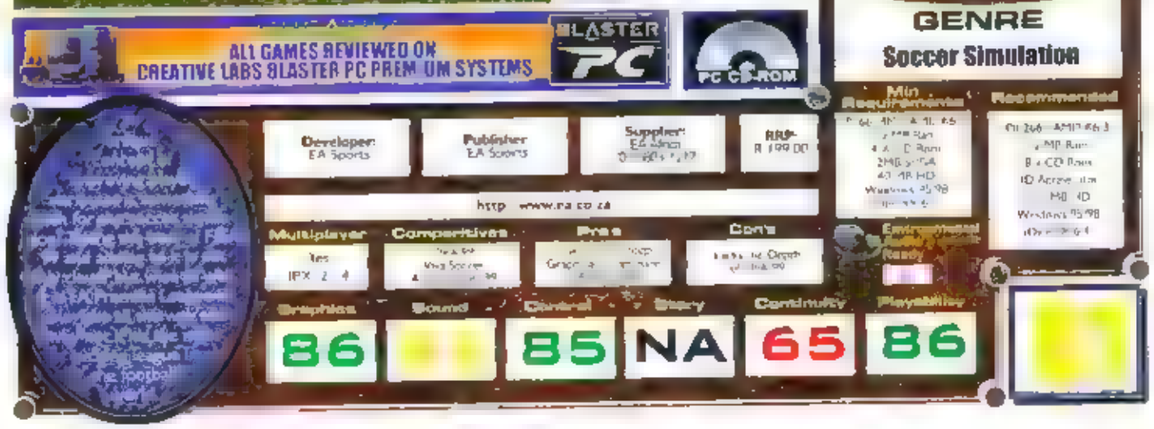
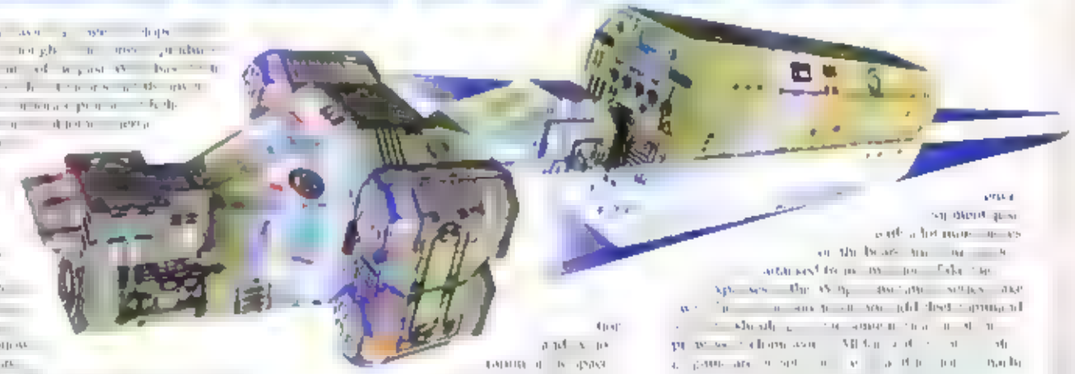
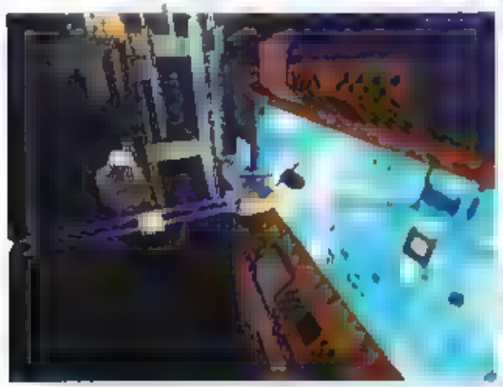
Throughout the ages of computer games, football sims have been at the forefront of technology and development. The leader in sports sims, EA Sports, have taken the award winning engine and creativity from FIFA 99 and added a unique blend of management and skill to the English EA Premier League. The FIFA franchise is still booming and with the upcoming release of FIFA 2000, can Stars stand up to the pressures of its own competitor?

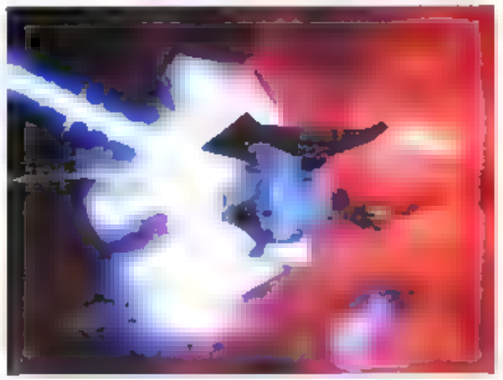


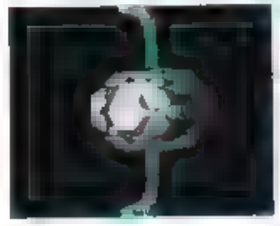
Innovation in gaming has come along very seldom over the last few years, leaders and originators of genres have almost exhausted every ounce of playability from almost every genre. The days of sculpturing our enjoyment and redefining new technologies are gone as developers scratch their heads for new and innovative ways to entertain us. It's not very often that you get a title that is not only fresh and exciting but takes a tired genre and re-invents it into something spectacular. Homeworld reiterates that there is life in genre building by taking the common practice of constructive thinking and non-corporate policies, and moulding it into one of the most rewarding gaming experiences since 'Doom'.

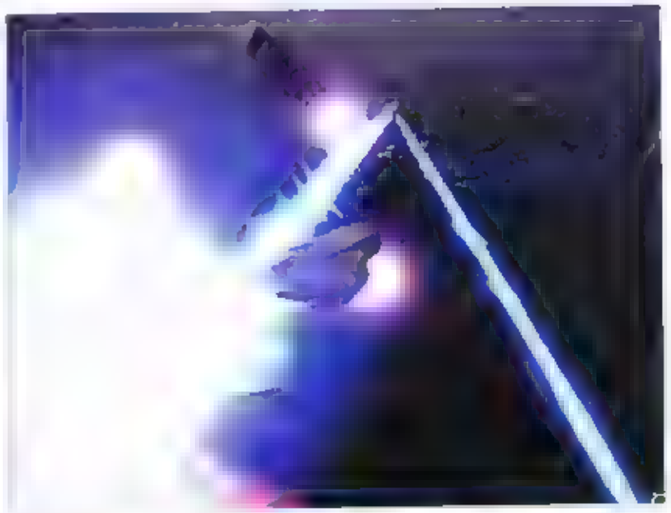
HOMEWORLD

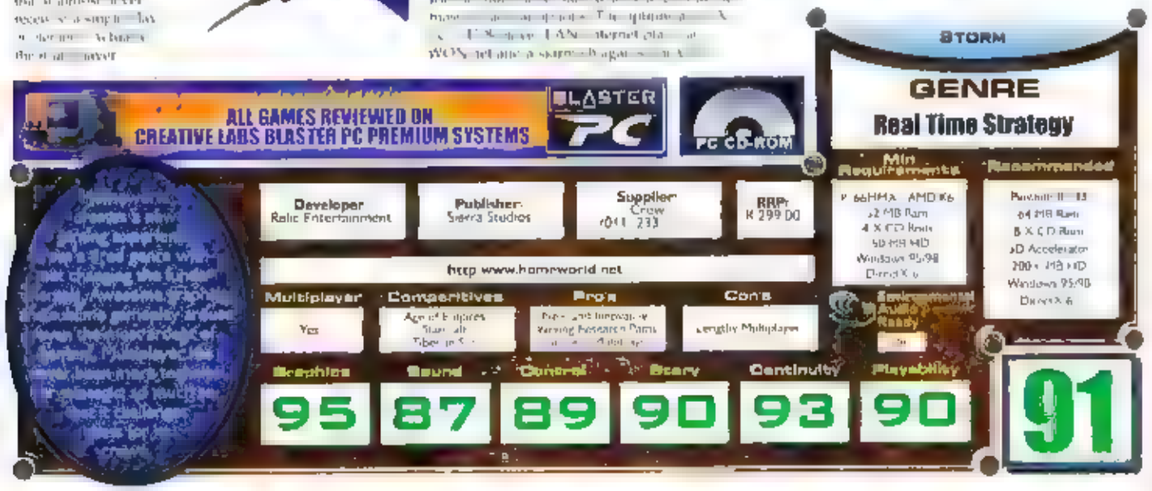












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More or less a year ago Red Storm Entertainment brought out Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six, a title that defined the tactical first-person shooter as we know it today. Although they didn't invent the genre, they are constantly busy perfecting it, and with the arrival of the long awaited sequel Rogue Spear, it seems they have done it pretty much perfect this time round. - Memnoch

Tom Clancy's RAINBOW SIX ROGUE SPEAR

How does a game company make a brilliant game even better? Is it at all possible without loosing the elements that made the first title so successful? Rogue Spear picks up where the original Rainbow Six ended. The Rainbow team saved humanity from the [illegible] but now they are [illegible] Rainbow has been [illegible] specialists [illegible] never get a gun crazed lunatic [illegible] and a string [illegible] taking place. All of these acts [illegible] very sensitive international nature [illegible] calling for the intervention of the Rainbow team led by John Clark, otherwise known as [illegible] Six.

This time around some crazy organization is fooling around with nukes, and your team has to track them down step by step, to make our world a safer place to live in once again. Therefore the name Rogue Spear. We've got [illegible] Rogue Spear offers us the chance to get something to do with nukes, ok! At first glance at the menu interface, it seems as if Rogue Spear is merely an overhaul of the original, but after a few minutes of play it becomes apparent that Rogue Spear enjoys many more advantages than simply technological advances that have occurred over the past year to include features such as weather effects like rain, snow and fog. The new engine also allows the use of better lighting effects, which makes for some nasty night missions [illegible] but the levels are so beautiful that they nearly distract you from the [illegible]

HEY, WE'RE UP HERE!

Rainbow Six was the [illegible] Terrorists had the ability to put a bullet up the player's cranium from a range of 100 meters while [illegible] the hip, less than a second after spotting the player. That [illegible] While the terrorists were the cream of the crop snipers, your own teammates were [illegible] cover, or would simply get stuck on the farm [illegible]

No [illegible] on the [illegible] that would stare at [illegible] Ubisoft listened, and scrapped the original AI altogether. They [illegible] new system from the ground up, which has got to be the best AI I have seen yet. The AI [illegible] now [illegible] the level [illegible] a paintball [illegible] of them are so beautiful that they nearly distract you from the [illegible]

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, MY BUM LOOKS BIG IN THESE PANTS?

[illegible] aged to dispatch the now terrified terrorist guarding her, but [illegible] she might not be that lucky.

BIGGER AND BETTER

Another major improvement in Rogue Spear [illegible] player models and animations. More than 15 [illegible] are used in making the characters [illegible] are much more detailed as well [illegible] The [illegible] with an [illegible] Rainbow Six [illegible] Rogue Spear [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

First off let me say I never played the original System Shock, but after playing System Shock 2 that is definitely on my agenda. Therefore I will be looking at the game from a totally fresh perspective. As the sequel to one of the most praised games of all time, System Shock 2 from Looking Glass Studios is set to be one of the best titles of 1999. Soul Assassin

system shock 2

It has been forty years since the artificial intelligence known as SHODAN (Sentient Hyper-Optimised Data Access Network) took over Citadel Station. All hands were murdered by the sentient computer entity in that incident and it is all but forgotten. It is now the year 2114 and Earth is about to test its first faster than light spaceship known as the Starship Von Braun, which is being escorted by the UNN Rickenbacker. During their maiden voyage the ship picks up a distress call from Tau Ceti 5 deep within unknown space, could this be first contact for humanity?

Your character awakens several weeks later from cryogenic sleep after cybernetic surgery without any recollection of why the surgery was done or why the crew aboard the ship has been slaughtered. Somehow SHODAN survived Citadel Station, and now threatens mankind during one of the most critical moments in our evolution. Raising the stakes is another mysterious force called "The Many", a small worm-like organism that forms a collective consciousness of unknown power and intelligence. Trapped and alone your first mission becomes survival and then you have to figure out the events that led to the tragedy of the crew being murdered on both ships. This is the story of System Shock 2, and you are in the middle of the whole mess. Nobody said that military service would be easy.

At first glance you might be forgiven for mistaking System Shock 2 as a First Person Shooter, it is this but the game can also be called an RPG. In simplest terms you can view the game as a hybrid between a FPS and a futuristic RPG. While the gameplay does look and feel like a FPS, you additionally have access to features such as an advanced inventory system, a detailed note and log book, and you can upgrade certain aspects of your character as the game advances.

Players can choose one of three careers to pursue while playing System Shock 2 each allowing the player to customise his character over a period of three years. Each year you can choose to advance one aspect of your character's statistics or skills by spending that year in training on various outposts and bases. Each career option is specific towards certain skills and you have the option of playing as a Naval Engineering Officer with skills in technical aspects such as hacking and repairs, a Marine with weapon skills or even as an OSA agent who is trained in the use of the mind with psionic powers. By choosing a career you make certain aspects easier on the earlier levels, but you are given the option to upgrade any of your statistics by collecting upgrade modules throughout the game. In essence it really doesn't matter what career you choose, you can still customise your character the way you see fit.

The most exciting feature of System Shock 2 is that you can interact with most of your environment. You can hack your way into locked compartments at one of the various replicators found on each level as well as various other computer based equipment. You can modify and maintain your weapons and even operate medical equipment to heal your character. In all the levels you will also encounter discs that can be used with your MFD. These inform your character of what happened during your cryogenic sleep and advance the story as you start piecing together the puzzle of how the crew got murdered. Some of these also contain simple yet fun mini-games to play such as 'Cornfield' which is a spoof of the Minefield game found in Windows. These small little touches that the developers added only add to the believability of your environment.

The crew had to have something to do while in space, and gaming is of-course the best entertainment available, isn't it?

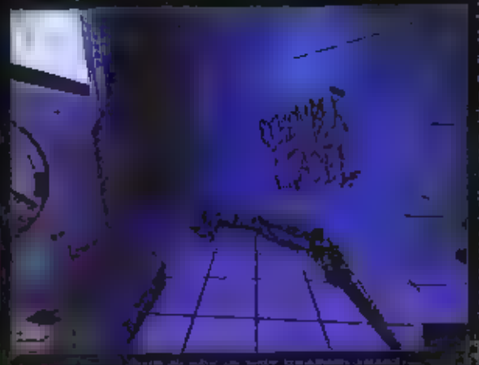
You might be one of the few survivors aboard the Von Braun, but there are plenty of monsters to face as you move through each of the levels. They range from mutants, which are crewmembers inflicted by parasites, to Cyberg Assassins and Robots. There are even monkeys running around that have developed the use of psionics (don't ask me where they got that idea from). Don't make the mistake of thinking that these enemies are easy prey. The AI used in System Shock 2 offers opponents that come after you no matter what. They will follow you if you run and can open doors and will shoot at you if there is only a piece of glass separating your character from them. Not only do you have to worry about enemies you also have to look out for toxins that can infect your body as well as radiation.

There is of course a range of weapons to use to combat these threats, if you can find them that is. The weapons range from standard projectile weapons such as pistols and shotguns to the more exotic psionic powers that can be obtained via upgrades using the modules you find. Even when you find them you need to maintain the weapons as they deteriorate and become non-functional after prolonged use. For toxins and radiation you need anti-toxin and anti-radiation hypos, which are injections that you give yourself. The availability of these items is dependent on the difficulty you chose when starting the game (Easy, Normal and Hard). The higher the difficulty the less weapons and hypos are available. I actually think the game is a little too tough and there are far too few munitions and hypos available.

As you annihilate different enemies they drop various body parts that can be researched. After you have researched these parts they give valuable information on how to effectively destroy the various monsters in System Shock 2.

After looking at the horde of features that System Shock 2 offers I thought the game would be a keyboard hog and that you would have to configure most of your keyboard just to access all the functions available to you. This couldn't be further from the truth. Looking Glass made an excellent user-friendly control interface. Using barely more keys than I do in Quake III, I was able to access all the functions. This is due to the fact that after you bring up the inventory and statistics overlays (which are overlaid on the first person view), you can access the rest of the functions with your mouse.

While this does work well, I do have one gripe with this method. You can't turn or fire your weapon while the overlays are present. This presents a small problem if a monster pops up and starts hacking at you. Unfortunately the game doesn't support DirectInput and gamers making use of a mouse wheel will have to find an alternative way of accessing functions they usually assign to it.



System Shock 2 uses an advanced version of the 3D engine used in Thief and delivers a visually stunning environment as you explore the deserted decks of the Von Braun and even some levels of the Rickenbacker. Dynamic lighting, fog effects, and expert texturing are used to conjure up levels that are masterfully put together to present the player with an environment that is terrifying and constantly creepy. You also have to keep avoiding the security cameras that are all over the place, or hordes of monsters come converging on your position. To avoid them you constantly have to keep sneaking through the levels and peering around corners to make sure that you don't accidentally walk into them.

Throughout the game you always feel deserted and alone on the massive levels and the fact that you can manipulate the majority of items, such as consoles, plants and other various items adds to the realism of actually being there.

Since System Shock 2 uses the Thief engine, sound becomes an important tool for manipulating your emotions. The game supports hardware accelerated 3D sound such as Creative's EAX to offer true surround sound. While playing the game you are treated to an eerie soundtrack and throughout the background noises such as Hybrids mumbling to themselves and sounds of malfunctioning computer equipment can be heard. System Shock 2 conjures up a hostile environment in which you constantly feel lost in and there is always a sense of the unknown being right around the corner ready to pounce on you. The game is easily one of the most frightening experiences of my computer gaming life and I take my hat off to the developers for delivering a game that draws you totally into the gaming world.

While the out of the box product doesn't have any multiplayer features, the developers have promised that this is coming in a patch that will be released soon. The patch will address a couple of minor issues and enable gamers to play in a co-operative multiplayer mode with up to 4 players. There will unfortunately be no support for deathmatch multiplayer games, the reason probably being a problem with have players would upgrade their characters before each deathmatch game. Let's just hope that the co-operative mode makes its debut in the patch. This will make System Shock 2 an even more enjoyable experience especially since we here at NAG like to play together, just call us multiplayer junkies.

Overall I found System Shock 2 to be one of my best gaming experiences this year. It offers gameplay that can be best described as a cross between Half-Life and Resident Evil 2 and offers challenging FPS action and an in-depth role-playing experience. If you enjoy first person shooter or role-playing games make sure you pick up a copy at your local retailer, you definitely won't be disappointed. Well let me get back to playing the game a second time round, maybe I missed something the first time.

ALL GAMES REVIEWED ON CREATIVE LABS BLASTER PC PREMIUM SYSTEMS

BLASTER PC | PC CD-ROM

Developer	Publisher	Supplier	RRP
Looking Glass Studios	Electronic Arts	[illegible]	R 299.00

http://www.shock2.com

Multiplayer	Competitives	Pro's	Con's
No	System Shock	[illegible]	[illegible]

Graphics	Sound	General	Story	Continuity	Playability
90	92	87	89	85	93

89

GENRE: First Person Shooter

Min Requirements	Recommended
Pentium 100 [illegible] MHz Ram 4X CD Rom 200 MB HD Windows 95/98	Pentium II 300 64 MB Ram 12X CD Rom 400 MB HD Windows 95/98

Environmental Audio Ready

G-POLICE
WEAPONS OF JUSTICE

It would seem that the clean, neat, mostly nice future visions embraced by works of science fiction a few decades ago are a thing of the past. No more neat, sterile space ships filled with happy people. No more gleaming crystal cities on pristine new worlds. No more friendly alien races who come in peace. Rather, the view taken by modern science fiction tends towards the dark, dreary and depressing. Huge cities, rife with crime and corruption, spread across scorched planets like a strange and inevitable cancer. Brother steals from brother in a constant struggle to survive at the lower rungs of the social ladder, while those at the top just grow richer and more detached, jaded about the plight of their fellow man. Other planets are colonised not out of curiosity, but out of necessity, as the Earth dies a slow and painful death. This is the kind of setting that popular fiction now makes use of. And G Police 2 is no different. — Sheyke

Let's face it. There are tons of science-fiction style shooter games on the market. Every second game requires the player to totally annihilate the alien invaders from Blubberon 7 with his magnetically charged spectro-whatzit-phaser gun. They're a dime a dozen, and get pretty damn boring after a while. I mean, how much time can be spent splashing green blood around without you getting just a little, well, tired of it? G-Police 2, like it's predecessor, is something of a fresh breeze to the whole science fiction shooter genre. In fact, it's so refreshing that it actually gets quite addictive.

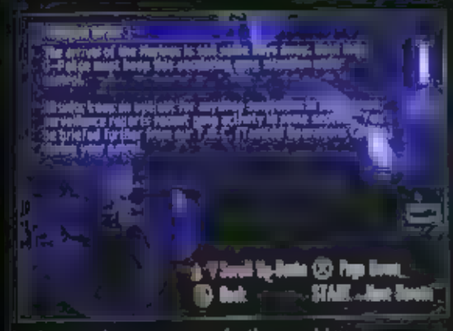
The whole premise behind the game lies in the fact that the Government Police Forces (hence G-Police) on the Callisto colony are understaffed, under armed, under funded and overworked. They have just finished a major war against an evil, manipulative super-corporation (which took place in the first instalment of G-Police), leaving them tired, worn out and generally not in great shape. These conditions are obviously perfect for the rise of several criminal gangs. These gangs have somehow managed to get their hands on pretty big firepower and cutting edge technology, and look set to take control of the Callisto Domes. Add to that the pressure put on by an official investigation into the activities of the G-Police, and you have a less than perfect situation - a truly bad time to be a cop. Not to mention the United Earth Marines that are about to declare a police state...

As in G-Police, G-Police: Weapons of Justice is a 3D environment of enormous scale. The world represented in the game is dark, gritty and impersonal, almost like something straight out of a William Gibson novel (and if you don't spend all your time playing games, you may actually know who William Gibson is). Giant buildings make up the most of the Callisto colony, with searchlights constantly sweeping the skies and thick traffic clogging both the streets and airways. The entire situation is under the constant cover of darkness, just to add to the feeling of gloom and doom that pervades the atmosphere of the game. This is the world that you enter as a G-Police officer, the pilot of a versatile thrust-boosted driven attack gun ship. You're armed to the teeth, manoeuvrable and pretty tough. Aboard this primary vehicle or one of the secondary vehicles available in later missions, you wind your way through the enormous, maze like cities that make up the Callisto Domes.

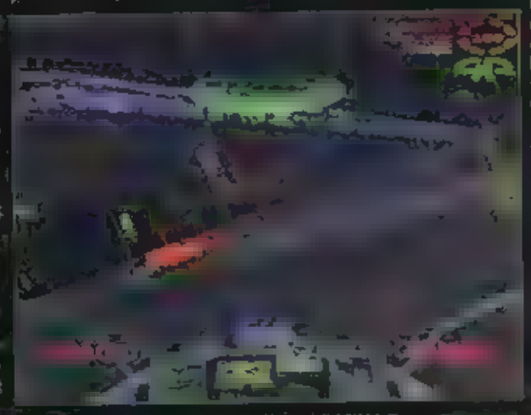
Population. This is one of the joys of playing G-Police 2; you can fly over, under or around virtually everything in the game. Tunnels, overpasses, traffic and buildings become something of a playground as you engage in routine patrols around the Domes. The speed of the gunboat makes zipping in between obstacles quite exciting, with close calls by the million. Of course, the game is not about winding your way through a living obstacle course. The major concern for the player takes the form of the gangs, and later the Syndicate. These guys are bad news. They are dare devil pilots who enjoy playing chicken while spraying your craft with tons of hot lead, only to turn away at the last minute and come back for more. And there are lots of them. Being in a G-Police craft doesn't help either. Show up on any crime scene, and the gangsters immediately drop whatever they're doing and turn their attention on you - improving your craft's ventilation becomes their immediate and all pervasive goal. Thankfully, your craft is apparently better armoured than theirs are. If nothing else. While your craft can take quite a pounding, it is relatively easy to blast a gangster out of the sky. This does not make the game any less challenging. In fact, it adds quite a large amount of satisfaction to game play as you send one gangster after another spiralling towards the ground in a disabled fighter after a chain-gun attack or two, or blow them into small atoms with seeker missiles.

Gunfire is a big thing in G-Police 2. There is a huge amount of lead filling the air most times, and it seems that the authorities (including yourself) have little regard for public property as they chase their quarries. Thankfully, the developers behind the game managed to get a really nice chain-gun sound going. It does the heart good to hear the throaty roar of your weapon as you show a gangster the error of his ways. The explosions, too, have a really pleasant, resonant boom. But the good sound effects are not restricted to violence. Much of the game's atmosphere is added by the eerie music that is ever present in the background - something almost reminiscent of Blade Runner (the movie, that is).

Of course, graphics are also important, and G-Police 2 doesn't go sparingly on the way things look. Yes, everything is pretty damn dark in the Callisto Domes, but we're not talking bright cheery Smurf-villages here, are we? Despite the drab setting, which I might add

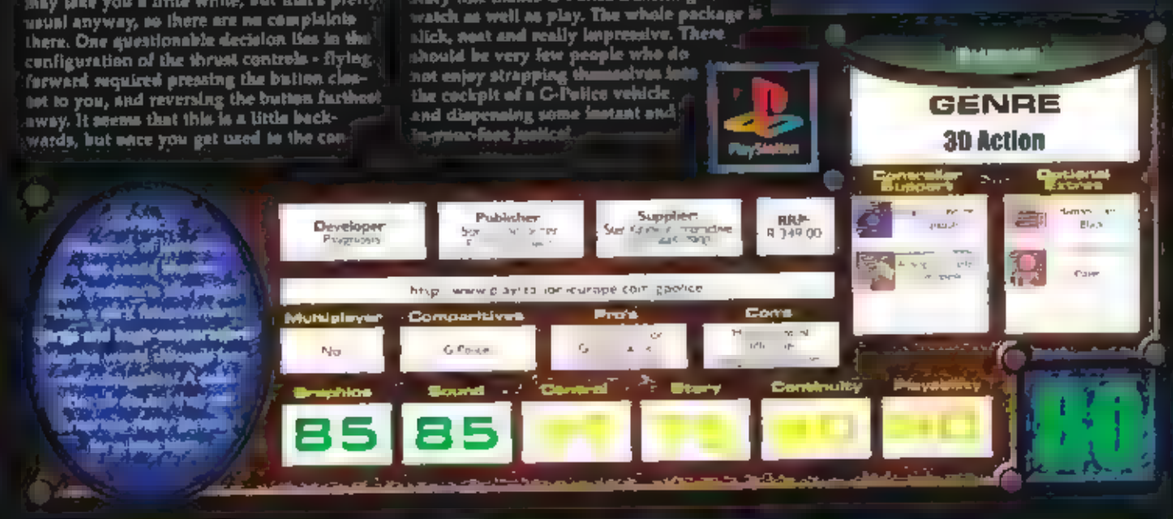


enhances the game no end - the graphics are crisp, clear and smooth. The inevitable clipping problems that seem to creep into most PlayStation games are present, but generally only occur if you're thick enough to go crashing into everything you see. Fly properly, and clipping will not be a problem. Excellent visual effects also abound, with beautifully handled explosions being the prime.



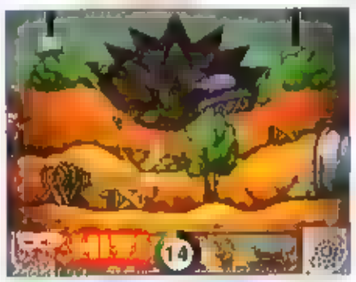
Small explosions (like those of gangster craft in mid-vaporisation) are pretty enough, but very blowing up a building for a truly spectacular whiteout experience. The whole graphics package that G-Police represents is not eye-candy, because it could never be called pretty, but it is still impressive. So it looks good and sounds good. But is it playable? It certainly is! The controls are comprehensive and simple to master. Getting used to the physics of the game may take you a little while, but that's pretty usual anyway, so there are no complaints there. One questionable decision lies in the configuration of the thrust controls - flying forward required pressing the button closest to you, and reversing the button furthest away. It seems that this is a little backwards, but once you get used to the control-method it becomes simple. The craft is quick, in terms of acceleration, but can tend towards sluggishness when turning. This is something to be aware of initially, if you don't want mouthfuls of pavement after attempting a rather steep dive. But none of these represent major control problems.

The missions represented in G-Police 2 are long and various, and number 35 in total. Basically this means that it's worth more than a couple of hours of game play. Whether you're busting gangs on a routine patrol, or trying to prevent a breakout from the penitentiary, the missions are fast paced, exciting and fun. You won't do the same thing twice in this game, and a multitude of weapons that become available as you progress through the levels make for even greater variation. Three vehicles, namely the gun-ship, cop car and the impressive Raptor MKII ground assault vehicle will all have you at the helm, just to make sure you don't get bored flying the same old thing all the time. Add to that the three difficulty levels, and you might just still be playing G-Police by the time you retire. The storyline behind G-Police 2 is [illegible] than the majority of those that accompany this type of game. It actually gets quite complex and engrossing after a while, and will keep you playing just to see what happens next. Combined with stunning cinematic sequences, the story line makes G Police 2 exciting to watch as well as play. The whole package is slick, neat and really impressive. There should be very few people who do not enjoy strapping themselves into the cockpit of a G-Police vehicle and dispensing some instant and in-your-face justice!



First came Time Crisis, complete with the GunCon. Then Namco brought us Point Blank, which also utilised the GunCon45, but instead of shooting at real people you were pitted against menacing targets. Now comes the sequel - Madman

IN MY SIGHTS



GUNSHOTS IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

Developer	Publisher	Supplier	RRP
Namco	Namco	Ster Kinekor Interactive 0 445 7900	R 349.00

http://www.namco.com

Multiplayer	Competitives	Pro's	Con's
Yes	Point Blank, Time Crisis	Great Multiplayer	Poor Graphics, Needs a Multitap

Graphics	Sound	Control	Story	Continuity	Playability
80	80	80	70	93	95

80

MADMAN

GENRE
Target Shooter

Controller Support | Optional Extras

The history of Motorbike Racing Simulation on the PlayStation is a non-existent affair. Nobody can really pinpoint why, but most of the conclusions stem from the demographic age group associated with the PlayStation. Superbikes is accurately associated with the older more mature gamer that prefers the realistic simulation to the arcade, now THQ have seen the opportunity to offer both in one, broadening its options to young and old.

Castrol HONDA SUPERBIKE RACING

Nowhere in the history of the PlayStation have we come up with a competitive title for Castrol Honda Superbikes except for similarities in RoadRash and Motor Racer from Electronic Arts. THQ realised the potential of bringing the Superbike Championship to the PlayStation after the successful of the title on the PC. It is not really sure whether the portal will be success or not but my prediction is that without competition in the game it should perform well.

Getting down to the finer details of Castrol Honda Superbikes, you only have the option of riding for the Castrol Honda Championship winning team of 1997, not that that is such a bad thing, my only gripe is that its two years old. You race on the winning bike of 1997, the Honda RC45, which in these days was electrifying. If modern day motorcycle is anything to go by then it could be said that 1998 was a disappointment for the team, but 1999 is turning out to be more successful after a few wins against the Ducati team of Carl Fogarty.

The portal from the PC to the PSX for CHSWC was not as seamless as I anticipated. Graphical glitches can be picked up at will and quality is certainly lost somewhere along the way. If you take the current crop of titles on the PSX as standard, then you could argue the fact that it's quite disappointing to say the least. There are good things going for it though with the use of high tech motion capture, the rider and bike animations are smooth and realistic. Certain graphical touches such as smoke billowing from the exhaust and tyre marks from taking too much out of a corner help to complete the attention to detail. All the tracks have been recreated in appreciable detail and THQ have added some interesting street circuits that will test your resilience most of the time.

It is highly recommended that you have a Dual Shock controller or similar control mechanism in order to maximise your playing pleasure. It's extremely difficult to master the normal button and digital left and right movements of the standard controllers especially on the more difficult settings. With the Dual Shock you are able to manipulate the amount of speed and turning needed to negotiate the tight cornering of the circuits. This is also dependant on how well you look after your bike because the more damage it sustains, the harder it is to control, or should I say the harder it will pull to either side. There is no visible damage on the bike (or the rider, mind please) except for a small visual guide on the left of the screen, which explains the area of the bike that has taken damage.

For all the Superbike and general racing fans out there who want total control over their racing pleasure, then Castrol Honda Superbike offers you plenty of that. Selections vary from rookie to ace levels, each selection can offer help for the beginner right through to the ultimate challenge for the experts. The AI is one of the highest calibre but does scale according to your level of expertise, I found that at no you make the transition is semi-pro that the AI takes a drastic advancement and is extremely difficult to beat. One interesting piece of trivia is that you can race in Ace level against 23 AI controlled opponents, but I honestly feel your biggest threat comes from yourself as you attempt to go faster and keep your rear-end in the saddle at the same time.

Castrol Honda Superbike has realistic revving sounds and a vibrating, heavy rock soundtrack, but for the most part the sound is average. A thumbs-up goes to the addition of adjusting and fine-tuning your bike's performance before a race, with a few tips thrown in from the Castrol Honda team, giving the simulation fan a little more to tinker with. There is also the 2-player option with split screen (vertical or horizontal) support for challenging your friends and foes. After completing the game on Ace level you are awarded the sole use of the famous Mosport test circuit as reward for your efforts (it's something).

I have to admit that Castrol Honda Superbikes is an enjoyable game that preys on my Superbike addiction but it is not an overwhelming piece of software by no means. Pinpointing the eye-catching features is difficult but then the same goes for its failures. If your interest lies in the genre then a recommendation must be given.

Developer	Publisher	Supplier	RRP
THQ	THQ	Ster Kinekor Interactive 445 7900	R 459.00

http://www.thq.com

Multiplayer	Competitives	Pro's	Con's
Yes	Real Bike Feel	Graphical Detail	Collision Detection

Graphics	Sound	Control	Story	Continuity	Playability
65	70	75	NA	66	75

75

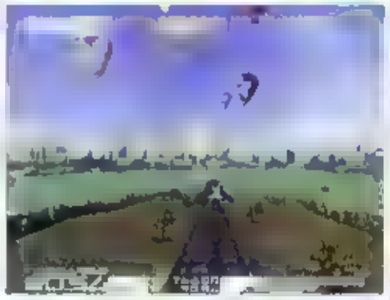
STORM

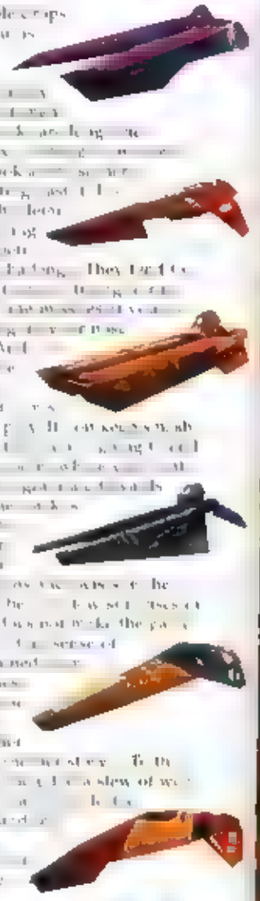
GENRE
Racing Simulator

Controller Support | Optional Extras

It seems that every second game made for the PlayStation today is a racing game. This is quite annoying, because it implies that developers are capable of nothing more than simulating racing around a track. One of the greatest criticisms that non-console players have is that variety is somewhat lacking in games made for use with television sets. So it doesn't really help when yet another racing simulator crosses my desk - the immediate response is "ah, no man. Not another one!"

wip3out





SHAYKE

GENRE
Racing Simulator

Developer:	Publisher:	Supplier:	RRP:
Psygnosis	Psygnosis	Sony Kaleidoscope Interactive 101 445 7900	R 429.00

http://www.playstation.europe.com/wip3out

Multiplayer	Competitives	Pro's	Con's
Yes	Wipeout Doom Arena	[illegible]	Very Similar to Other Games

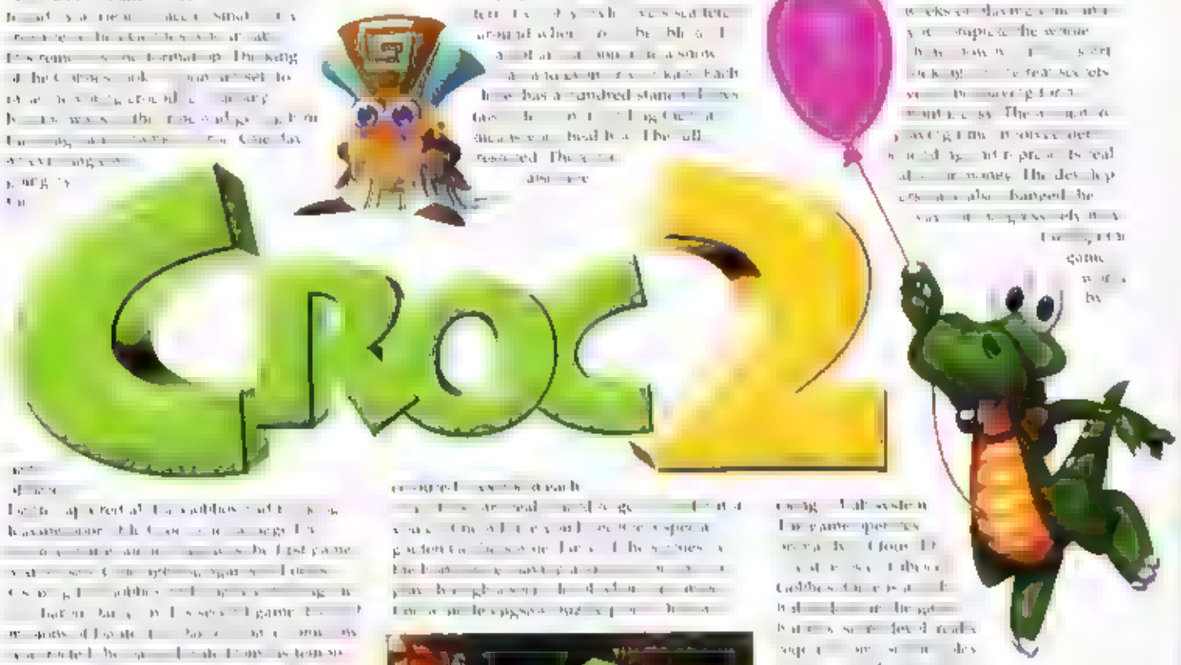
Controller Support	Optional Extras
[illegible]	[illegible]
Analog Controller Compatible	2 Player

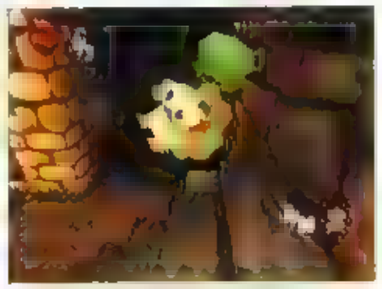
Graphics	Sound	Control	Story	Continuity	Playability
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	NA	[illegible]	[illegible]

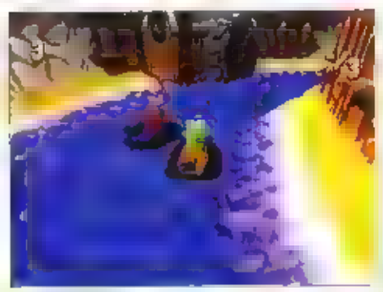
75

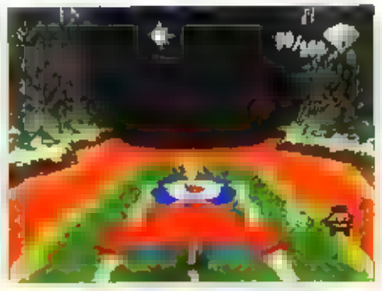
FINISH
IF YOU'RE GONNA EAT DUST, AT LEAST MAKE IT FUN
NO FEAR
DOWNHILL MOUNTAIN BIKING
Codemasters
PlayStation

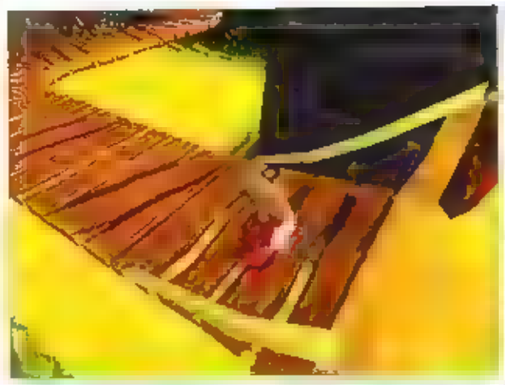
We've all heard the tales of babies being raised by wolves, apes and given time possibly even aliens too. However, it is only in the fantastic world of computer games that tiny furry characters with huge eyes can raise a single toothed bright-green crocodile. Throughout the upbringing, you have to wonder if this crocodile ever realised that he was being raised by a potential late afternoon snack, but that's a different game altogether. It's more 3D-platform fun and this time you control a crocodile instead of a bandicoot.

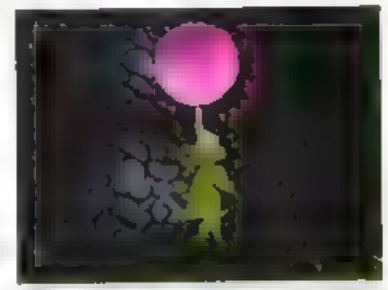


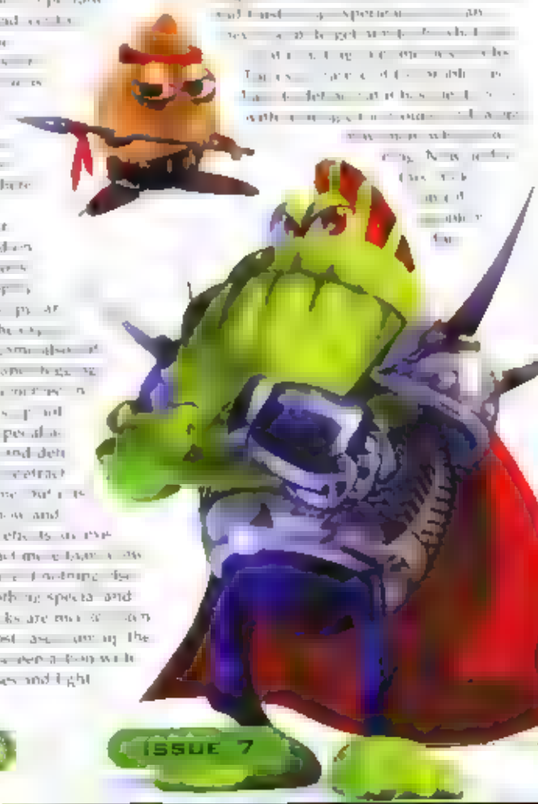


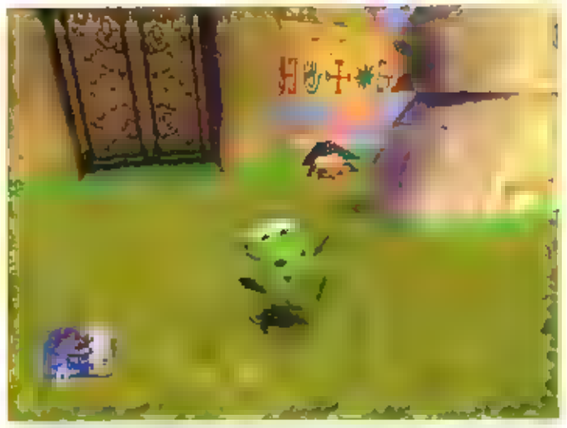












REDTIDE

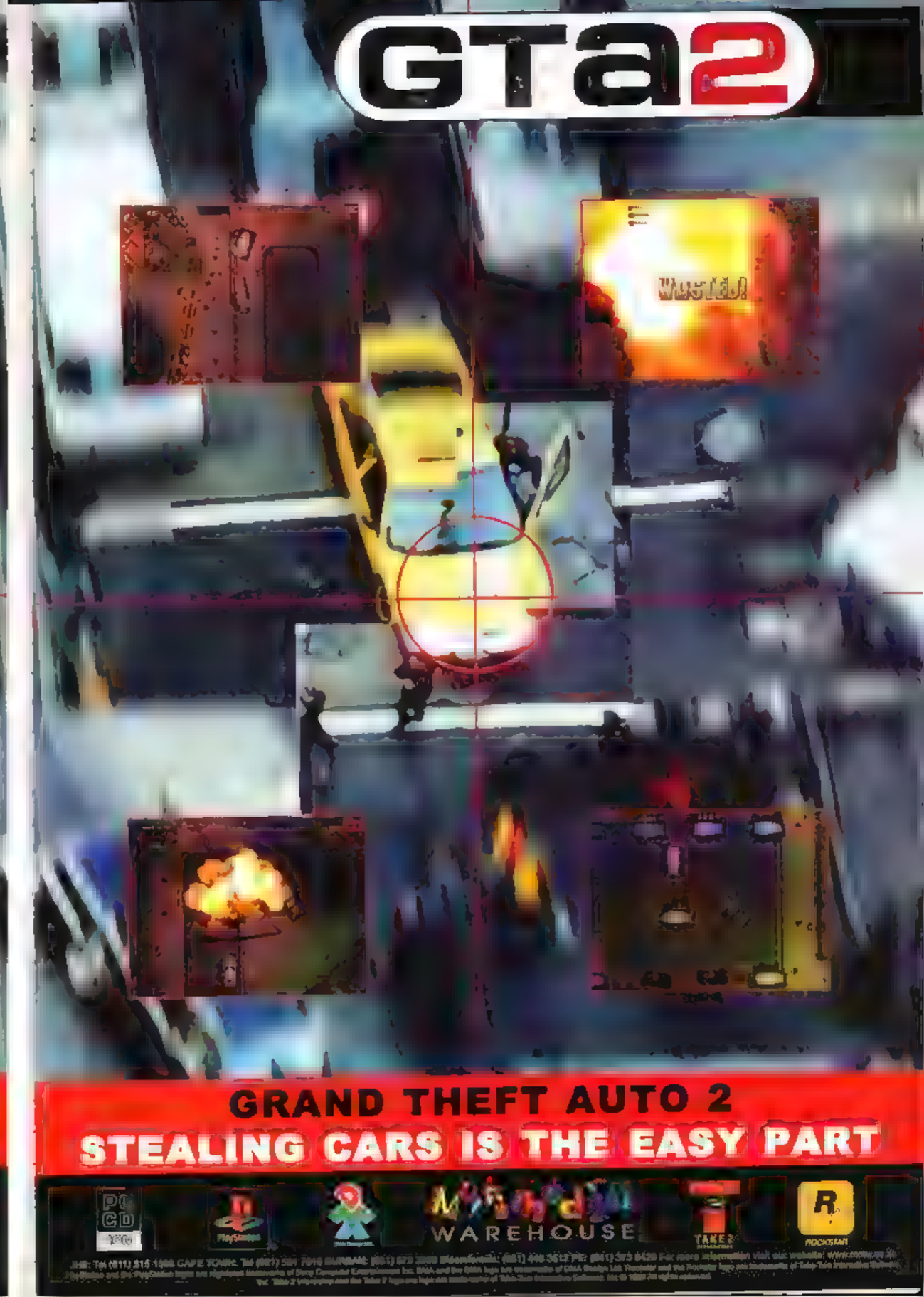
GENRE
3D Platform

Developer	Publisher	Supplier	RRP
Argonaut Software	Fox Interactive	Electronic Arts Africa (011) 803 2 2	R 349.00

http://www.foxinteractive.com

Multiplayer	Comparitives	Pro's	Con's
No	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Graphics	Sound	Control	Story	Continuity	Playability	
89	[illegible]	49	68	92	59	73


GTa2
GRAND THEFT AUTO 2
STEALING CARS IS THE EASY PART
WAREHOUSE
TAKE 2
ROCKSTAR

Bargain Buys

The Q Range

Speed around super tables, work out how to get to sports and music shows and try to be the gas day in the world. This game is a must for all gamers out there and it can be played by up to four players at once. Micro Machines 2 is the sequel to the original Micro Machines game which was released a few years ago. This game has been updated with new tracks, new vehicles and new features. Micro Machines 2

Did you just buy yourself a new 3D accelerator? Maybe you bought a TNT-2 based card or maybe Voodoo3 based board. It cost you an arm and a leg and finally you have the latest in 3D-accelerator technology, or so you might think. Currently outpacing the CPU, which doubles performance roughly every 18 months, graphics accelerators are set to double performance every 6 months, and nVidia has made an announcement concerning their new next generation chipset, which are due to ship by the time you read this.

Soul Assassin

The new chipset titled GeForce 256 from nVidia is really going to be pushing the envelope and the [illegible] not only [illegible] but also richer, crisper and cleaner representations of 3D environments. Unlike previous generations of 3D accelerators, which kept on pushing the performance envelope by bringing us faster and more [illegible] GeForce 256 is [illegible] bringing increased performance but also promises to [illegible] 3D acceleration into a whole new dimension [illegible]

The chipset will be bringing some very high-end technology to the bargain bucket. Technology usually reserved for professional OpenGL cards such as the ones made by 3D Labs and Intergraph. The key words for nVidia's GeForce 256 [illegible] are Transformation & Lighting, [illegible] Geometry and Lighting, [illegible] Environment Mapping, and a 256-bit rendering engine.

You're probably wondering just exactly what is Transformation & Lighting and how will it benefit us gamers. At the end of the day is the question I hear from everyone out there.

Simply put, T&L [illegible] is a unit [illegible] which [illegible] a highly powerful [illegible] and [illegible] which [illegible] to turn will allow developers to [illegible] more realistic [illegible] playing [illegible]

Croft game where Lara actually looks like she does on the box. This is going to become a reality in the not too far distant future and the inclusion of dedicated T&L units is a step in the right direction. The GeForce 256 will be the first mainstream 3-D graphics chip to integrate discrete transform and lighting T&L units on the chip.

Until now a lot of processing power [illegible] was responsible for doing T&L calculations and this inevitably takes away processing power that could have been used for other tasks such as more advanced AI routines or more realistic physics models. If you also take into consideration that CPUs are currently [illegible] as fast as graphics accelerators, one can see the need for graphics accelerators taking away some of these processing burdens so that the user experience can continue to evolve, and not be hindered by the limitations of the CPU. The obvious step is to have these specific calculations [illegible] the 3D chipsets. This is why nVidia are incorporating dedicated transformation & lighting engines into the chip themselves. Not only does this lighten the processing load on the CPU, but due to the specialised nature of 3D accelerators and the general purpose nature of the CPU, these cards can do the calculations a lot faster than the CPU could ever hope to do. With a simple lighting scenario nVidia is stating that the GeForce 256 is four to five times faster than a Pentium III 550, but they have measured speed differences of up to 10 times faster.

This will give developers more processing power on the CPU to use for other tasks while simultaneously giving them access to more advanced hardware accelerated T&L functions on the 3D chipsets. At the end of the day it is a win-win situation for both game developers and gamers. Obviously we gamers benefit the most with improved realism and more eye candy. graphics is after all the most important factor in a game after gameplay.

Cubic Environment Mapping

Up until now developers have been using Sphere

Environment mapping, which creates a realistic reflection off of reflective objects, unfortunately the reflection only looks realistic while the object is stationary. Once any motion is introduced or the camera angle is changed you can pick up that the reflection doesn't change with the motion and then changes to a very discernible fake reflection. To provide more realism the GeForce 256 will support the more [illegible] Environment mapping, which offers realistic reflections, even when motion is introduced or the [illegible] angle changes. According to nVidia you can even zoom up close to reflective objects with this method without any loss in quality seen on the reflection.

On Upgrading

[illegible] there are quite a few graphics accelerator owners grinding their teeth right now, after reading this article. At roughly [illegible] released, keeping up with the latest and greatest graphics technology can become quite expensive. Very few gamers can afford to keep paying that amount of cash every six months. Unfortunately or fortunately depending on your perspective there is no slow down in sight, and we have to bite the proverbial bullet as it were and keep forking out if we want immediate access to the latest technology. I would recommend that anyone taking their gaming seriously put away some cash every month so you can afford these cards when they are released, or at least purchase every second generation. If it is going to strain [illegible] budget too much

256 bit Rendering Engine

The [illegible] is going to be the [illegible] but rendering engine in the market and promises to deliver the ability to render four 32-bit pixels per clock cycle, twice as many as the Riva TNT2 chipset. Called the QuadEngine architecture, there will be four 64-bit rendering [illegible] each processing one pixel each per clock cycle. This combined with a 480 million pixel/sec fill rate should enable the GeForce the fastest graphics accelerator in the market yet and most this just for gaming. I can't wait to get my hands on a reference board to see some Quake III testing. With an estimated 50 Gigaflops of processing power the GeForce 256 will be capable of an unprecedented 15 million sustained polygons per second, enough to draw a scene that is twice as realistic as current 3D accelerators.

nVidia is also hoping that cards based on the GeForce 256 will be used on high-end workstations for CAD/CAM applications. It will give decent enough acceleration under 3D programs making use of the OpenGL API and it will be cheaper than the professional cards that most 3D developers use.

Other Important Factors

nVidia will have support for DirectX [illegible] the drivers for the GeForce [illegible] should be released [illegible] before the first cards appear on the market, which should be in late September in the States and probably late October for South Africa. As always the card will support for the OpenGL and OpenGL API's taking up the [illegible] running any of the newer games on the market but currently the only games that will be able to run on the GeForce will be [illegible] games making use of 3Dfx's proprietary Glide API, but this is [illegible] Unreal [illegible] Quake games.

As we have come to expect from nVidia's chipsets the GeForce 256 will be a 2D/3D solution, as the [illegible] will support [illegible] RAMDAC [illegible] The chip will also [illegible] have support for using a TV out via an external control chip should a card developer wish to make use of it.

The GeForce 256 will also have support for 4X AGP and by the time the first cards appear on the market Intel should have also released their 820-core chipset, which will enable cards to make use of the 4X technology. Until now the TNT2 has had support for 4X but due to the delay of the 820 chipset none of the [illegible] have had the opportunity to [illegible] advantage increase will be when using this technology. Overall one can say that the GeForce 256 is a very ambitious development by nVidia and promises to [illegible] only can we look forward to increased frame rates but also to more detailed and numerous [illegible] for one are definitely looking forward to the GeForce 256, but the taste is in the pudding. Keep an eye out for the GeForce 256 review that we will [illegible]

Soul Assassin

Quotes from the Industry

"It is fast. Very, very fast. It has the highest fill rate of any card we have ever tested, has improved triangle setup over TNT2, and it gives Quake3test scores 40% faster than the next closest score with extremely raw beta drivers. The throughput will definitely increase even more as these drivers mature."

John Carmack, Id Software

"The sheer power of NVIDIA's next generation GPUs gives its creative freedom when designing characters and worlds. The technology not only allows us to incorporate unprecedented detailed visuals, but it also offers the [illegible] design, and more. In short, it's the next giant step in [illegible]"

Darren Falcus
VP and General Manager, Acclaim Studios

"Space isn't likely to feel empty here (Bahrain 5), instead, you can expect some battles of unprecedented epic scale. So far, the team has tested the engine with up to 350 ships fighting it out."

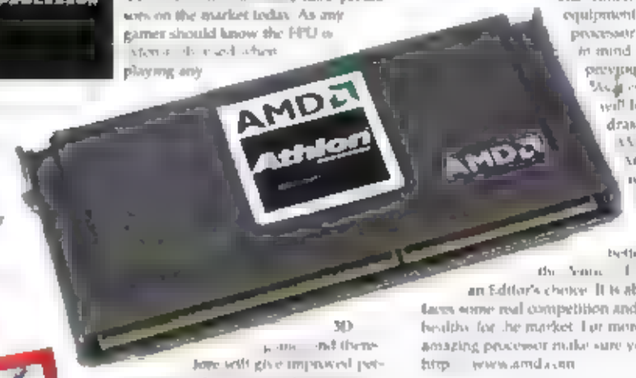
David Gehringer, Product Manager, Sierra Studios

New King of the Hill

The market's first [illegible] AMD has surpassed the Intel [illegible] daughter manufacturer for the first time the world's largest processor manufacturer failed [illegible] with a competitor. Built around DEC Alpha technology the Athlon is now the fastest processor currently available, the new King of the Hill.

The AMD Athlon consists of [illegible] less than 22 million [illegible] and delivers the highest performance [illegible] available today. [illegible] available at 500 MHz, 550 MHz, 600 MHz and 650MHz with the price ranging from R2120 to R6400.00. A little more expensive than Pentium II processors, but the difference is marginal and you get what you pay for.

The AMD Athlon ships with a 128 KB L1 cache, four times the size of the 32 KB L1 Cache found on Pentium II processors. This will ensure that AMD Athlon scales very well even as it approaches the 1 GHz clock speed. The increased L1 cache [illegible] and it can run at 600 MHz. AMD also showed the Athlon running [illegible] at 200MHz using the DEC EV6 bus protocol. The front side bus has a peak bandwidth of 1.6 [illegible] the bus is still scalable to 400MHz, which can increase the bandwidth to an amazing 3.2 [illegible] released later this year. As you can see the AMD bus is not only faster [illegible]



From a purely technical point of view the AMD Athlon [illegible] includes the first fully pipelined, superscalar floating point engine for x86 platforms. This means that it has a very fast FPU and according to AMD it is 35% faster than Intel's 3dnow processors [illegible] RISC processors on the market today. As any gamer should know the FPU is [illegible] playing any

3D [illegible] and there [illegible] here will give improved performance [illegible]

The AMD Athlon also supports [illegible] instruction set and includes support for the new instruction added on the Pentium III chipset. It also has Enhanced 3D Now! support which is AMD's version of SIMX, [illegible] and makes [illegible]

As with any good news, there is always a [illegible] The AMD Athlon is not only faster [illegible]

Pro's: First Real Intel Competitor; DEC EV6 Bus Protocol; Fastest Processor Available

Con's: Proprietary Slot A Connector

R 2120.00 R 6400.00 (RRP)

Virtual Media Systems
(011) 768-6080
www.amd.co.za

Gravis Xterminator

[illegible] I am only actually reviewing it now, but I am pretty sure that I have tried to keep it a secret. Now my reign of being the only person in the office with the [illegible] ends. The Xterminator is the result of a [illegible] between Gravis and Accord Multimedia.

Let me firstly mention that this is an [illegible] Xterminator for all my gamepad requirements. He features an [illegible] bit versatile for all your gaming requirements. [illegible] It is totally programmable and [illegible] has excellent gaming support and ease of use. The drivers are easily installed with full support for Windows 98. [illegible] turn means no calibrating or settings. The features include 19 pro[illegible] One of the most [illegible] with full pro[illegible] and an 8-way Hat Switch, all positioned at the top of the [illegible] sensitivity for the driving games. [illegible] split screen multiplayer and you got one of the most dynamic controllers available in South Africa. The Xterminator is designed with one thing in mind – comfort. All buttons and slid[illegible]

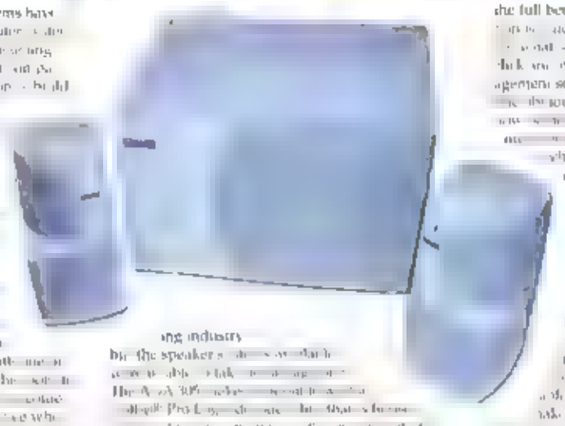
[illegible] I have battled to find a [illegible] that [illegible] close to my Xterminator's durabilities and comfort. This is NAG's gamepad of choice thus far.

Pro's: 19 Fully Programmable Selections; Excellent Game Support; Proportional Directional Thumb Pad

Con's: Heavy Price Tag

R 569.00 (RRP)
Accord Multimedia
E-Mail: amendelsohn@bulltech.com
(011) 315-8277
www.gravis.com

Altec Lansing ADA 305 Digital Powercube



Over the last few years speaker systems have become an integral part of [illegible] which most people can appreciate. [illegible] usually a thankful bunch when it comes to building high quality speakers at reasonable prices that offer excellent performance. [illegible] companies being Altec Lansing. The range of speakers is almost endless depending on the need of the computer user. [illegible] speakers. [illegible] been, though designed [illegible] now, is still in the upper [illegible] speaker [illegible]

[illegible] a 3-speaker system [illegible] calls [illegible] the [illegible] give the impression [illegible] speaker that [illegible] and right, surround and centre channel. The [illegible] has been used for a few years in the home

FEATURES

[illegible] Two Seven Watt rear satellite drivers
[illegible] high-strength cast aluminium
Frequency Response of 45 - 20 kHz
Satellite power: 14 watts (4 watts per satellite)
[illegible]
Subwoofer power: 17 Watts RMS
Signal Impedance: 10k ohms
S/N Ratio: 70dB
Single Port USB Node
One 15 pin [illegible] connector

[illegible] the [illegible] Altec Lansing [illegible] Digital Pro Logic [illegible] Dolby Pro Logic [illegible] channels of audio that makes up a left and right, surround and centre channel. The [illegible] has been used for a few years in the home [illegible] a specially designed speaker box that [illegible] desk for ease and convenience. [illegible] desktop speakers are aligned [illegible] of system is that usually [illegible] and the Altec [illegible]

[illegible] the full benefits of the system. The software installation is quick and easy with a toolbar graphic [illegible] sound setting you are using, just a simple double click [illegible] other [illegible] agement software.

[illegible] question that springs to mind about [illegible] it's fairly expensive but you [illegible] which [illegible] by the [illegible] extravaganza. At R 599.00 you would probably expect them to talk back [illegible] well with the right software they will. There are many speaker systems [illegible] with the quality of the Altec Lansing range, so the distributors Accord Multimedia have thrown in a surround kit to help with the purchasing decision. The [illegible] speaker system comes with a [illegible] only. That is sheer madness [illegible] the price [illegible] Multimedia and Altec [illegible] using the SA market an opportunity [illegible] seeking. The system [illegible] [illegible] specialist [illegible] [illegible] of specialist [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

It's faster, bigger, better and boasts possibly the most advanced multimedia chip-set in the world, it's the PlayStation 2 and we've got the pictures. Below you'll find details on the new controller, memory cards and some of the games that will be released when the unit goes on sale in Japan on the 4th of March 2000. The only bad news is that the rest of the world, including South Africa is going to have to wait a little longer until Sony's new dream machine arrives. Don't worry though, we're planning an illicit trip to the Far East next year to see if we can buy a few, now how much is that Yen to Rand conversion again? NAG

PS2 FEATURE FIRST LOOK

Your first look at what the PSX2 looks like

The technical specifications below sound very impressive, but can also tend to be a little confusing... Just know this, each of these single components are very impressive on their own, now put them all together in a single machine and you have pure gaming power.

Product Name : PlayStation2
Dimensions : 301mm W x 178mm D x 78mm H
Weight : 2.1 Kg (perfect for a doorstop, right?)
Media : PlayStation 2 CD-ROM, PlayStation CD-ROM, DVD-ROM, DVD Video and Audio CD. (You can play CD's, DVD movies, your old PlayStation games and obviously all the new PSX 2 games)
Interfaces : 2 controller ports (more on them below), 2 Memory card slots, AV Multi-cable Output, Optical Digital Output, 2 USB ports, 1 i.Link (IEEE1394), 1 Type III PCMCIA card slot.
CPU : 128 Bit Emotion Engine, System Clock Frequency 294.912 MHz, Main Memory - Direct RDRAM, Memory Size 32MB
Graphics : Clock Frequency 147.456 MHz, Embedded cache 4 MB VRAM
Sound : Number of voices - 48 channels and software, 2 MB Sound Memory
I/O Processor (IOP) : CPU Core [illegible] CPU+, Clock Frequency 33.8688 MHz or 36.864 MHz (selectable), 2 MB IOP Memory
Disc Device : 24 Speed CD-ROM, 4 Speed DVD-ROM
CD-ROM Colours : PlayStation 2 CD-ROM - Blue underneath; DVD Discs - Silver; PlayStation Discs - Black

Sony has naturally made numerous improvements to their existing peripherals, and these two new outside-the-machine-bits will be shipped with the PlayStation 2 with most to follow.

Memory Cards : 8 MB Memory card (grey); Larger capacity, 250 times faster than the current models. On an interesting side note Sony plans to launch their new on-line authentication and encryption system in 2001 called 'MagicGate'. This new system will work by using an authentication and user number system that will allow you to play your downloaded games - perhaps. Sony has finally found a cure for the cancer we call piracy. In case you're wondering... Sony will be manufacturing and selling hard drives in the future to store downloaded software (how this [illegible] African market also remains to be seen).

Controllers : Dual Shock 2 (Black), Same as the existing Shock controller, with the exception of the Start and Select buttons the entire controller is analog based allowing for more precise D-Pad control, just how the analog buttons (Circle, X, O and Square) benefit playing games remains to be seen. The core trailer will work on your old PlayStation.

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The PlayStation 2 enters the market with tremendous support from a number of third party development companies all falling over themselves to get in on the action. What this means is that you'll have no shortage of games to play. Here is a very short list of some of them - Street Fighter Ex3; Bass Fishing; Bust A Move 3; Bloody Roar; Bomberman 2001; Wild Wild Racing; New Ridge Racer; Tekken Tag Tournament; Gran [illegible]

These titles represent just some of what we can expect from the new machine, but as the first PlayStation proved it'll take a few years before we really start seeing what this new console can [illegible]

The future is bright in the world of PlayStation and everyone out there should start saving up for the release next year, just think, it's a CD player, a DVD player and a gaming platform that'll keep wowing you for the next five years.

Well there you have it, apologies to our printers who had to wait a whole extra day before starting this issue just so we could bring you this hot information, aren't you glad we care so much?

PlayStation2 is charting a path toward the future of networked digital entertainment. Just as the PlayStation brought interactive gaming to an unprecedented mass market, PlayStation2's combination of breathtaking digital graphics, superb sound and DVD video will open the door to a new computer entertainment experience for the home. Ken Kutaragi, President and CEO, Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

Getting your Tournament right

Tournaments can be a lot of fun and a great place to meet other players and pick up good trades. They can also be very daunting as well as a lot more expensive than a government department. Why are there so many different kinds? Who came up with Limited? And what on earth is Block? Is it ever possible to have different rules in Magic the Gathering tournaments each with rather different rules? Well, all of the above and more will be covered in this article. Before we start, however, there are a few basic rules that apply to all tournaments.

The most popular version of Magic around is the Standard tournament. This is where you can only use cards from the most recent sets released. Currently this is Urza's Saga, Urza's Legacy and Urza's Destiny. Standard events are usually held every weekend and are a great way to get to know your opponents and to play against a wide variety of decks. The other most popular tournament is Booster Draft. Here you buy a number of booster packs (usually three) and then build a deck from the cards you open. Each player opens the same packs and then passes them to the next player. This continues until all the cards have been drafted. Then you build your deck from the cards you have drafted and play against the other players in the draft. Booster Draft is a lot of fun and is a great way to get to know your opponents.

Sealed Deck tournaments are also very popular. Here you buy a number of booster packs (usually six) and then build a deck from the cards you open. Sealed Deck is a lot of fun and is a great way to get to know your opponents.

Block tournaments are made up of the main expansion sets in the Block. For example, Tempest Block tournaments are played with Tempest, Stronghold and Exodus. Urza's Block tournaments are played with Urza's Saga, Urza's Legacy and Urza's Destiny. Mercadian Masques Block tournaments are played with Mercadian Masques, Nemesis and Prophecy. Invasion Block tournaments are played with Invasion, Planeshift and Apocalypse.

Limited tournaments are also very popular. Here you buy a number of booster packs (usually six) and then build a deck from the cards you open. Limited is a lot of fun and is a great way to get to know your opponents.

Standard events are usually held every weekend and are a great way to get to know your opponents

Competitive Gaming: the BEGINNING and the END

www.ea.co.za
www.easports.com

SHARP

scored my Premier
... last season it would
have been Scholesy's effort against
Liverpool
Little ginger fella pops up on
the edge of the box and just
buries it!
The ball screams through the air
like a cruise missile right into the top
corner.
If Friedel had got there, it would
have ripped his arm off.
Not bad for a ginger!

Watson, Salford.

STARS
PlayStation

ELECTRONIC ARTS
Africa

EA SPORTS

Score the goal of your dreams in the game of your dreams.

The Demo Scene

OPTIMISE 99

Stop wondering and start plundering. All of SA's top demo experts will be there. Will you be?

By PAUL FURBER

INTERNET: HTTP://WWW.SURF.TO/DEMOS

E-MAIL: SADEMO@EGROUPS.COM

E-MAIL: MAVERICK@IS.CO.ZA

It's all systems go for Optimise 99. By the time you read this, the competition will be only a few weeks away. Probably less than three weeks away in fact. So this month's column is devoted to a quick summary of what you can expect, when to expect it, and also to clear up some misconceptions about what will happen there. Misconceptions out the way first:

Misconception #1:

It's only for Joburg-based people.
Answer: Wrong. Cape-based demo people are organising a bus up here which is already half-full I hear. There will also be some Durban entries including Denthor of the demo tutorial fame.

Misconception #2:

The rules seem designed to exclude people.
Answer: Nothing could be further from the truth. Artists will have two separate competitions to test their skills with both hand-drawn and rendered creations. They are separate for a reason - 3D Studio and Blender tend to produce better images than a hand-moved mouse, for example. Likewise musicians will have two separate competitions to test both their four channel and multiple-channel skills.
A word on rules: competitions in general must be pretty carefully circumscribed for them to have any meaning. I could break the world record for the hundred metres simply by dropping from an aircraft. The rules are there so as to define not only how people are competing, but also to highlight the skills they used in their entries. The 128k intro will show the audience that the team (or single programmer) has no mean skill in squeezing as much as possible into as small a space as possible. The open competition will produce a few surprises - but then, that's what it's there for!

Misconception #3:

There will be nothing except recognition if I win.
Answer: No, there will also be T-shirts, games, accessories, R10 000 software packages, hardware and CDs available to the lucky winners. So there.

is far less about winning and losing and more about a community with some common interests getting together and showing what they can do. Bring your entry along - no one is there to pick holes.
Now that you're all convinced, here's a quick breakdown of the details you need to know about what's going to be happening. (By the way all of these points are available in more detail from http://www.surf.to/demos).

Place:
The party venue is "The Horror Café" which is a club in Newtown Johannesburg.
Address:
16 Becker Street, The Horror Café is part of the SAB centenary center and is accessible from the Becker street side. (See the Maps)
Date:
Saturday 23rd to Sunday 24th October 1999
Official Starting Time:
12:00pm (registration will happen from 9:00am onwards)
Competitions on Day 1:
Ray-traced Art, 4-channel music, and Open competition
Goodies on Day 1:
Multiplayer games, game development talk, surprise competitions
Competitions on Day 2:
Hand-drawn art, multiple-channel music, 128k intro, and Megademo
Goodies on Day 2:
Multiplayer games, surprise coding competitions.

The venue has a restaurant and bar, so there'll be plenty to keep you well fed and watered. Just please check out the rules on drugs and drinking.
See you there! And remember my challenge from last month. If you enter the ray-traced or hand-drawn art and place higher than I do and - this is the important bit - you don't use Gimp or Blender, then I owe you a drink.
Next month will see a full report back on the competition! Till then adios and work hard on your entries!

Misconception #4:

The demo scene is dying - why bother to fight the trend?
Answer: This is an easy one to answer. The demo scene is made of the people who occupy it. What they do and organise defines how "dead" it is or isn't. This year's competition is in a nightclub, will be professionally organised with plenty of prizes and is being looked at with very interested eyes by some very large local software houses. The reason: they want to get into funding local games programming teams. There might even be some overseas visitors to check up on the talent. Dead? I don't think so.

Misconception #5:

I'm not good enough to enter.
Answer: If you don't enter, you won't know. Besides, the event

PAUL FURBER - 'MAVERICK'

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Important Information

This section is for PlayStation exclusively, PC gamers please see the cover CD where we place any new cheats for PC games. The archive on the CD is ongoing and contains all PC cheats to date. In the future we may consider placing a PlayStation cheat archive on the CD.

WWF Attitude

Alternate Costumes
Selecting your wrestler in any mode other than the Career Mode, press X for the default outfit, hold L1 and press X for outfit 2, hold L2 and press X for outfit 3 and hold R2 and press X for outfit 4.

Bonuses
To unlock all the codes in WWF Attitude, you must bring a wrestler through the entire Career Mode successfully (meaning win the Heavyweight Belt at the end).

Random Wrestler Selection
When selecting your wrestler, press R1 and the icon will be randomly placed on a name.

Career Mode Bonuses
Win the following championship titles or Pay-Per-View events in Career mode with any wrestler on any difficulty setting to unlock the indicated bonuses and / or wrestlers

European Title
Unlocks Sable, Marc Mero, Trainer, squeaky mode, and new custom stuff in 'Create Wrestler' mode. Squeaky mode makes wrestler voices sound squeaky and fast.

Intercontinental Title
Unlocks Jaqueline, Chyna, big head mode, and gives three additional attribute points in 'Create Wrestler' mode. Big head mode gives the wrestlers big heads.

WWF Heavyweight Title
Unlocks head, beep mode, and ego mode. Ego mode makes the size of a wrestler's head increase when they gain momentum, and shrink when they lose momentum. When beep mode is unlocked a 'Bleeped Out' option on the language menu under utilities will appear. Enable that option to bleep out all foul language.

King of the Ring PPV
Unlocks Kurrgan and Taka Michinoku.

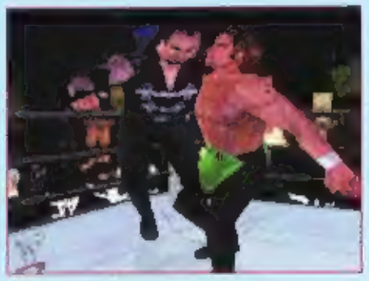
Summerslam PPV
Unlocks Sgt. Slaughter and Shawn Michaels.

Play as Referee
Successfully complete career mode as 'Stone Cold' Steve Austin to unlock the referee in PPV events.

Play as Godfather
Beat the game as D-Lo Brown or Mark Henry in challenge or career mode under the normal or hard difficulty setting.

Ladies Costumes
Beat the game as Val Venis in challenge or career mode under the normal or hard difficulty setting. Additional female clothing will be available in creation mode.

New Costumes
Beat the game as Mankind in challenge or career mode under the normal or hard difficulty setting. Additional male shirts, jackets, masks, pants, and accessories will be available in creation mode.



More Hair
Beat the game as "The Rock" Rocky Maivia in challenge or career mode under the normal or hard difficulty setting. Additional facial hair will be available in creation mode.

Sled Storm

Unlock the Storm Sled
Enter Circle, Triangle, Square, R2, R2, and L1, X, Triangle as a password.

Play as Jackal
Enter L2, L2, Circle, R2, Square, R1, L1, and Triangle as a password.

Rabbit Points
If you see little rabbits hopping across the course, run into them. They'll give you 7500 points.

Um Jammer Lammy

Bonus Stages
Beat any 2 stages in the normal game to unlock 2-player Lammies. Beat 2-player Lammies to unlock 2-player versus Lammies.
Beat the 1-player game to play as Parappa.
Beat 1-player Parappa to unlock 2-player Lammy Parappa.
Beat 2-player Lammy Parappa to unlock 2-player versus Lammy Parappa.

Get Bonus Parappa Levels
Finish the game, return to the level select screen and press Right until the bonus levels appear.

Custom Lyrics & Notes
As soon as Lammy appears on the title screen when booting the game, immediately reset the PlayStation system. When the game restarts you should have a new menu next to Lammy's guitar on the title screen.

PLAYSTATION CHEATS

Tarzan

When low on lives, replay the earlier levels over and over. Save the game after completing each level that is replayed. After accumulating enough lives, return to the last level that was unlocked and continue the game.

Unlimited Lives
While playing, press L1, R1, L2, R2, L1, R1, L2, R2.

Level Skip
While playing, press R1, R2, L1, L2, R2, L1, L2, L2.

GTA 2 London 1969

Cheat Codes
(Cheats can be used in combination) Enter one of the following codes as a player name. Enter and accept a code, then go to "Rename" and enter another code. Your character can also be renamed to any desired name after the last code is entered. The streets will never be the same again!

Codes with Multiple Features
Enter '**HAROLDHARD**' as a player name for all levels, all weapons, infinite ammunition, 'Get Out Of Jail Free' card, armour, parrot picture, 9,999,990 points, ninety-nine lives, 5x multiplier, no cops, and display co-ordinates.

Enter '**GETCARTER**' as a player name for all levels, all weapons, infinite ammunition, 'Get Out Of Jail Free' card, armour, ninety-nine lives, 5x multiplier, maximum wanted level, and display co-ordinates.

Enter '**FREEMANS**' as a player name for all levels, all weapons, infinite ammunition, 'Get Out Of Jail Free' card, armour, and 5x multiplier.

Enter '**DONTMESS**' or '**TOOLEDUP**' as a player name for all weapons, infinite ammunition, 'Get Out Of Jail Free' card, and armour.

Enter '**SORTED**' as a player name for all levels, all weapons, infinite ammunition, 'Get Out Of Jail Free' card, and armour.

All Levels
Enter '**RAZZLE**' or '**READKNIFE**' as a player name.

London Levels 1 and 2
Enter '**MAYFAIR**' as a player name.

London Levels 1 through 3:
Enter '**PENTHOUSE**' as a player name.

Ninety-nine Lives
Enter '**NCVICAR**' as a player name.

9,999,990 Points
Enter '**BIGBEN**' as a player name.

5x Multiplier
Enter '[redacted]' as a player name.

Maximum Wanted Level
Enter '**OLDBILL**' as a player name.

No Cops
Enter '**GRASS**' as a player name.

Display Co-ordinates
Enter '**SWEENEY**' as a player name.

Destrega

Maximum Charge Dash
Charge two or three levels then cancel with a dash. These dashes can deflect lower level attacks. For example, Dash level 3 deflects all level 2 attacks.

Random Level Select
Press START on the level select screen to randomly pick a level.

Secret Characters
Finish one player mode with any character then in the Character Select press start on that character to get the hidden character.

Chocobo Racing

Bonus Characters
A bonus character is unlocked each time you beat the story mode. Then at the character selection screen, highlight Squall and press the following buttons to get the bonus characters

Cid - L1.
Mumba (FF8) - L2.
Cloud (FF7) - R1.
Cactuar / Cactrot - R2.
Aya (Parasite Eve) - L1 + L2.
SD-Style Chocobo - R1 + R2.
IbenSuper Airship - L1 + R1.
Jack - L2 + R2.

Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver

Infinite Health
Pause the game and press Left, Right, Left, Right, Square, Circle, Square, and Circle. If you entered the code correctly, you will hear the sound of a growl.

Omega Boost

Find Secret Levels
U1 Zone - Complete on hard difficulty setting with 90 AP and without using any continues.
U2 Zone - Complete on hard difficulty setting with 60 AP.
U3 Zone - Complete on hard difficulty setting with 50 AP.
U4 Zone - Complete on normal difficulty setting with 70 AP and without using any continues.
U5 Zone - Complete on normal difficulty setting with 60 AP.
U7 Zone - Complete on hard difficulty setting without using any continues.
U8 Zone - Complete on normal difficulty setting.
U9 Zone - Complete on normal difficulty setting without using any continues.
V5 Zone - Complete with 60 AP.
Inner Level A - Complete with 60 AP (with invincibility, all weapons at level 9).
Inner Level B - Complete on the hard difficulty setting with 90 AP (with unlimited special attacks, all weapons at level 3).
Inner Level C - Complete on the normal difficulty setting (with highest speed, all weapons at level 9).
Inner Level D - Complete on the normal difficulty setting with 95 AP (with five-way attack, all weapons at level 9).
Inner Level E - Complete on the hard difficulty setting (with improved speed when moving up, down, left, right, all weapons at level 9).

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater

Unlock all Practice Mode Levels
Pause game play, then hold L1 and press Square, Up, Left, Up, Circle, Triangle. The pause screen will shake to confirm correct code entry. Quit the current level and enter the level selection screen. All practice mode levels will be unlocked.

Big Head Mode
Pause game play, then hold L1 and press Left, Up, L, Down, Up, X. The pause screen will shake to confirm correct code entry. Quit the current level and start another game.

Extra Points
Hold the D-pad + Circle while in the air and release the button before hitting the ground.

Special Moves
Press Left, Left, Square to perform a special move when in the half-pipe in the street course. You need to get enough air to land it.

Please send any cheat requests to ssssssin@nag.co.za.

Send Off

I finally have my cartoon thanks to the Editor getting his act together *(Hey, watch it sunshine - Ed)*. This will be a continued feature - at least so I am promised. This month the comic features our resident cartoonist Shryke and it illustrates actual events that took place here at NAG. Just kidding, but Storm was really close to actually flinging his cordless keyboard.

I wonder who here at NAG Shryke will make fun of next month, maybe RedTide and his piece of f*restick. He's actually trying to convince us that the piece he sticks on his monitor improves his aiming in Quake III, not that any of us have noticed a difference in his score yet.

I expect everyone has noticed that last month's CD interface didn't quite centre properly at any resolution under 1280x1024. My apologies for any inconvenience that his might have caused our readers, in my rush to get the CD finished I forgot to turn on Director's centre option. I promise it won't happen again... Really!

This month we also welcome Daniel Botha who came to visit us for two weeks to find out just exactly how a magazine is put together. Very simple actually, lots of work, lots of Quake III and lots of caffeine. Hopefully he learnt something from his experiences here at NAG and who knows, one day after he's finished school he might want to join our team. Maybe we should arrange some type of competition for next year where the winner will spend his school holiday here at NAG.... Just an idea, but send any comments on this to assassin@nag.co.za

We also finally received Tiberian Sun and I must say that I was a little disappointed with the game, after so much hype the game still follows the traditional C&C style gameplay. I would have liked to see some new advancements and innovations for the RTS genre, unfortunately Tiberian Sun won't be the game to deliver this. Not that it's a bad game, I only expected more. By the way we all did receive a copy and for one I think the Editor is happy about that since he doesn't have to spend some time in hospital. (If you're confused with the last statement see last month's Send Off article).

Well the end of the year is nearing and almost every developer in the world is releasing their best titles over the next 3 months. We can look forward to such titles as Quake III, Diablo 2, Ultima Ascension, Swat 3, FIFA 2000, Tiger Woods 2000, and so the list continues. It is definitely going to be a jolly Christmas this year. You might want to consider drawing up that Christmas wish list a little early this year and giving it out to all those who 'love' you, who knows you might just get what you asked for...

Without further ado here is the prediction list of games that should appear in the next issue of New Age Gaming, developers and distributors willing of-course.

Some slippage has occurred - you just never know in this industry...

DARKSTONE

Well this game didn't make it this month due to some minor slippage, but we're now sure that it'll feature in the next issue (fingers crossed). We'll still be leaving no stone unturned in our continuing quest to find out if Darkstone is more than just another pet rock simulation. Nothing has changed since last month and the game is still going to be a 3D medieval role-playing game.

FINAL FANTASY VIII

Question: What comes on four black discs, costs a packet to produce and is the biggest game on the PlayStation. Answer: Final Fantasy VIII. If you know nothing about this landmark series of games then make sure you get the next issue of New Age Gaming. If you've been waiting all your life for this title, then just know it's almost here.

BLOOD OF THE ROSES GABRIEL KNIGHT

Our intrepid and somewhat laid back investigator of the occult returns to test his skills against a whole new set of adversaries in Gabriel Knight III, and in true Gabriel Knight form, the game looks totally different yet again! But it is guaranteed to be a spine chilling and hair-raising affair, with the flavour and feel that made Gabriel Knight famous.

QUAKE II

This game is the second one that didn't make it to the church on time. We're really looking forward to Quake II on the PlayStation, just to see if the PlayStation version can cut the mustard in the wonderful world of Quake. So look out for it next issue, it simply has to make the deadline this time or we'll be dropping its score by a few percent... just kidding.

SOUL REAVER

The strange city of Nosgoth beckons you in Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver. Take control of Raziel, a betrayed vampire bent on revenge as you make your way through this gothic masterpiece. Rest assured, this one is going to blow you away! New technology makes Soul Reaver the next big game to beat on PlayStation. Prepare to be amazed...

a NAGging suspicion...

True stories from the NAG office written and illustrated by Shryke

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